This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

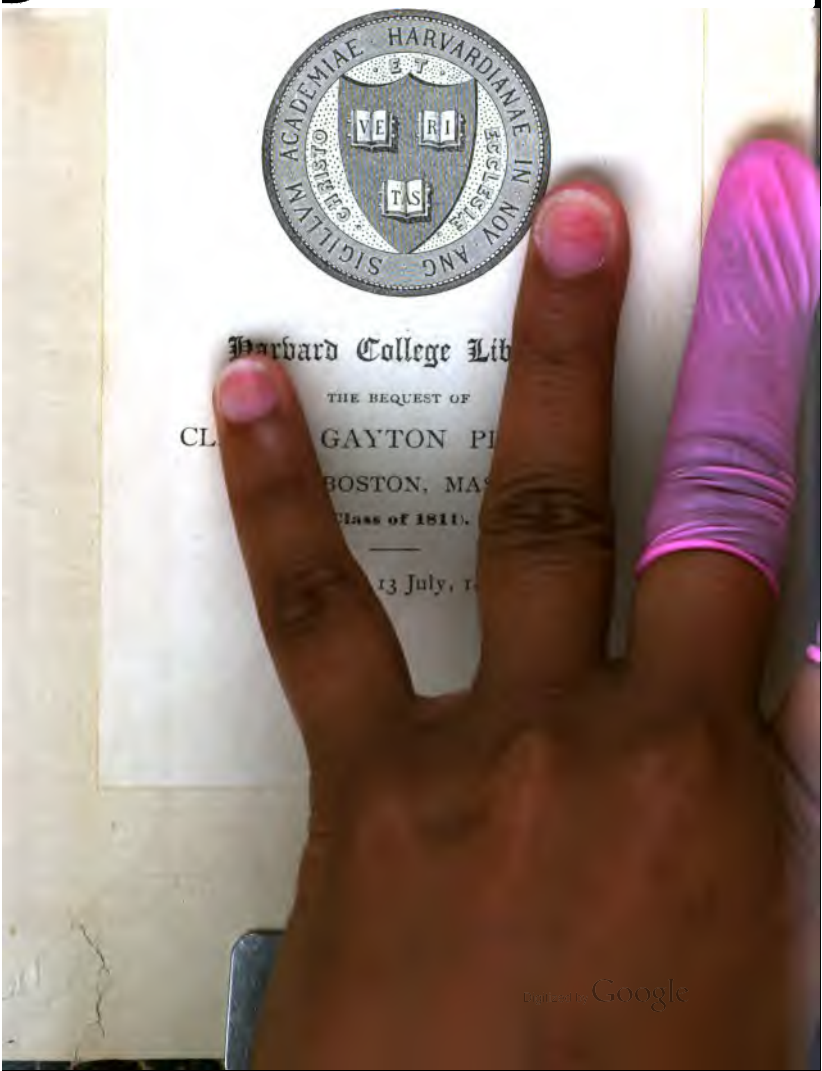
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

19428.5 Bd. Dec. 1892.



Digitized by Google

19428.5 Bd. Dec. 1892.

Harvard College Library

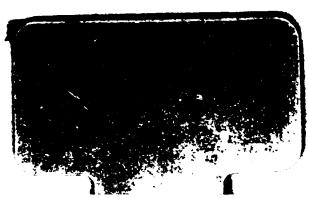
THE BEQUEST OF

CLARKE GAYTON PICKMAN,

OF BOSTON, MASS.

(Class of 1811).

Received 13 July, 1860.



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

C. Gayton Pickman

12. April. 1829.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

B.
O

THE

MISCELLANEOUS

604-52
2

PROSE WORKS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT, Bart.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LIFE OF SWIFT.

BOSTON:
WELLS AND LILLY—COURT-STREET.
.....
1829.

Digitized by Google

19428.5
1860, July 18.
Pickman
Bequest.

Digitized by Google

LIFE

OF

JONATHAN SWIFT.

BY WALTER SCOTT.

BOSTON:
WELLS AND LILLY—COURT-STREET.

1829.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

OF

VOLUME SECOND.

PAGE.

SECT. I. SWIFT'S Parentage and Birth—His Life at College—His first residence with Sir William Temple—Visits Oxford—He takes Orders, and obtains the Living of Kilroot—Resigns that Living in favour of a Friend, and returns to England—His second residence with Sir William Temple—The Battle of the Books, and Tale of a Tub—Verses on the burning of Whitehall—Swift's Correspondence with Miss Waryng—He becomes acquainted with Stella—Sir William Temple dies, and bequeaths his Works to Swift—Swift's Views of Promotion at the Court are disappointed, ... 5

SECT. II. Swift goes to Ireland with Lord Berkeley—His differences with that Nobleman—Obtains the Living of Laracor—He is displeased with his Sister's Marriage—His mode of Life at Laracor—Mrs. Dingley and Stella come to Ireland—Tisdal makes proposals of Marriage to Stella—Swift embarks in Politics—His Opinion of the Affairs of Church and State—Tale of a Tub, 41

SECT. III. Swift's Journey to England, in 1710—His Quarrel with the Whigs, and Union with

Digitized by Google

PAGE.

Harley and the Administration—He writes the Examiner—The Character of Lord Wharton—and other Political Tracts—Obtains the First-Fruits and Twentieth-Parts for the Irish Clergy—His Correspondence with Archbishop King—His Intimacy with the Ministers—The services which he renders to them—Project for Improving the English Language—His Protection of Literary Characters—Difficulties attending his Church Preferment—He is made Dean of St. Patrick's—And returns to Ireland, . . . 76

Sect. IV. Swift takes possession of his Deanery—Is recalled to England to reconcile Harley and St. John—Increases in favour with Oxford—Engages again in Political Controversy—Writes the Public Spirit of the Whigs—A reward offered for the discovery of the Author—The Dissensions of the Ministers increase—Swift retires to the Country—Writes to Lord Oxford on his being displaced—And retires to Ireland on the Queen's Death—His reception—His Society—The Interest he displayed in the Misfortunes of his Friends, ... 116

Sect. V. Swift's First Acquaintance with Miss Vanhomrigh—She follows him to Ireland—Swift's Marriage with Stella—Death of Miss Vanhomrigh—Poem of Cadenus and Vanessa—Swift's Studies during his Retirement from 1714 to 1720—His System of Life and Amusements—Engages in Irish Politics—His Proposal for encouragement of Irish Manufactures—and other Tracts—Drapier's Letters—Swift's subsequent Popularity, 148

Digitized by Google

PAGE.

SECT. VI. Swift retires to Quilca—His Friendship for Sheridan—He visits England—Has an Audience of Walpole—Becomes known at the Prince of Wales's Court—Returns to Ireland, and Publishes Gulliver's Travels—He revisits England—and is recalled by Stella's Indisposition—Her Death—Swift Treats with the Court and Minister—His Writings on Irish Affairs—He Quarrels with Lord Allen—Is intimate with Carteret—A Letter is forged in his Name to the Queen—His Miscellaneous Prose Writings about this Period—His Poems—His Residence at Gossford with Sir Arthur Acheson, and the Verses which were written there, ... 205

SECT. VII. Swift's conduct as a dignified Clergyman—His controversies with the Dissenters—And with the Bishops of Ireland—Verses on his own Death—Faulkner's Edition of his Works—His Quarrel with Bettesworth—Satire on Quadrille—Legion Club—Controversy concerning the lowering of the Gold Coin—History of Queen Anne's Reign—Swift's private Life at this period—He disposes of his Fortune to found an Hospital—He sinks into incapacity—His Death, 264

CONCLUSION. Person, Habits, and Private Character of Swift—His Conversation—His Reading—Apparent Inconsistencies in his Character—His Charity—His Talents for Criticism—Character of the Dean as a Poet—As a Prose Author, 305

APPENDIX, ... 331

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MEMOIRS

OF

JONATHAN SWIFT, D.D.

SECTION I.

Swift's parentage and birth—His life at college—His first residence with Sir William Temple—Visits Oxford—He takes orders, and obtains the living of Kilroot—Resigns that living in favour of a friend, and returns to England—His second residence with Sir William Temple—The Battle of the Books, and Tale of a Tub—Verses on the Burning of Whitehall—Swift's correspondence with Miss Waryng—He becomes acquainted with Stella—Sir William Temple dies, and bequeaths his works to Swift—Swift's views of promotion at the Court are disappointed.

The life of Swift forms an interesting and instructive narrative to all who love to contemplate those alternations of good and evil which chequer the fate of individuals, distinguished by their talents and by their fame. Born under circumstances of the most pressing calamity, educated by the cold and careless charity of relations, denied the usual honours attached to academical study, and spending years of dependence upon the inefficient patronage of Sir William Temple, the earlier part of his history may be considered as a continued tale of depressed genius and disappointed hopes. Yet, under

Digitized by Google

all these disadvantages, Swift arose to be the counsellor of a British administration, the best defender of their measures, and the intimate friend of all who were noble or renowned, learned or witty, in the classic age of Queen Anne. The events of his latter years were not less strongly contrasted. Involved in the fall of his patrons, he became a discontented and persecuted exile from England, and from his friends, yet, almost at once, attained a pitch of popularity which rendered him the idol of Ireland, and the dread of those who ruled that kingdom. Nor was his domestic fate less extraordinary—loving, and beloved by two of the most beautiful and interesting women of the time, he was doomed to form a happy and tranquil union with neither, and saw them sink successively to the grave, under the consciousness that their mortal disease had its source in disappointed hopes, and ill-requited affection. His talents also, the source of his fame and his pride, whose brilliancy had so long dazzled and delighted mankind, became gradually clouded by disease, and perverted by passion, as their possessor approached the goal of life; and, ere he attained it, were levelled far below those of ordinary humanity. From the life of Swift, therefore, may be derived the important lesson, that, as no misfortunes should induce genius to despair, no rank of fame, however elevated, should encourage its possessor to presumption. And those to whom fate has denied such brilliant qualities, or to whom she has refused the necessary opportunities of displaying them, may be taught, while perusing the history of this illustrious man, how little happiness depends upon the possession of transcendent genius, of political influence, or of popular renown.

Jonathan Swift, Doctor of Divinity, and Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, was descended from the younger branch of the family of Swifts, in Yorkshire, which had been settled in that county for many years. His immediate ancestor was the Reverend Thomas Swift, vicar of Goodrich, in Herefordshire, and proprietor of a small estate in that neighbourhood. At the beginning of the civil wars, this gentleman distinguished

Digitized by Google

himself by his zeal and activity in the cause of Charles I.; and his grandson has recorded, in a separate memoir, his exploits and sufferings during the civil wars. To that memoir, and the notes which accompany it, the reader is referred for further particulars concerning Swift's family.* After having been repeatedly plundered by the parliamentary soldiers, even to the clothes of the infant in the cradle, (which, according to family tradition, was Jonathan, father of the Dean,) and to the last loaf which was to support his numerous family, Thomas Swift died in the year 1658, leaving ten sons, and three or four daughters, with no other fortune than the small estate to which he was born, and that almost ruined by fines and sequestrations.

The sufferings of this gentleman were of some service to his family after the Restoration; for Godwin Swift, his eldest son, who had studied at Gray's Inn, and had been called to the bar, was appointed Attorney-general of the Palatinate of Tipperary, under the Duke of Ormond. He was a man of talents, and ap-

* See No. I. Appendix. Swift put up a plain monument to his grandfather, and also presented a cup to the church of Goodrich or Gotheridge. He sent a pencilled elevation of the monument, (a simple tablet,) to Mrs. Howard, who returned it with the following lines, inscribed on the drawing by Pope. The paper is endorsed, in Swift's hand, "Model of a monument for my grandfather, with Mr. Pope's roguery."

JONATHAN SWIFT
Had the gift,
By fatherige, motherige,
And by brotherige,
To come from Gutherige,
But now is spoil'd clean,
And an Irish Dean.
In this church he has put
A stone of two foot;
With a cup and a can, Sir,
In respect to his grandsire;
So, Ireland, change thy tone,
And cry, O hone! O hone!
For England hath its own.

The lines, originally written in pencil by Pope, are traced over in ink by Dr. Lyons, as a memorandum bears. It occurred amongst Dr. Lyon's manuscripts.

Digitized by Google

pears to have possessed a considerable revenue, which he greatly embarrassed by embarking in speculative and expensive projects, to which his nephew, Jonathan, ever after entertained an unconquerable aversion.* Meantime, however, the success of Godwin Swift, in his profession, attracted to Ireland three of his brethren, William, Jonathan, and Adam, all of whom settled in that kingdom, and there lived and died.

Jonathan Swift, the father of the celebrated author, was the sixth or seventh son of the Vicar of Goodrich, the number of whose descendants, and the obscurity of their fortunes, does not admit of distinguishing his lineage more accurately. Jonathan, like his brother Godwin, appears to have been bred to the law, though not like him called to the bar. He added to the embarrassments of his situation, by marrying Abigail Ericke of Leicestershire, a lady whose ancient genealogy was her principal dowry. The Dean has, himself, informed us, that his father obtained some agencies and employments in Ireland; but his principal promotion seems to have been the office of steward to the society of the King's Inns, Dublin, to which he was nominated in 1665.

This situation he did not long enjoy, for he died in

* One of these projects seems to have been the iron manufactory at Swadlingbar, mentioned sarcastically by the Dean in his Essay on Barbarous Denominations in Ireland, Vol. VII. p. 147. Swift's dislike to projects and projectors, is exhibited in his Essay on English Bubbles, and the subsequent Tracts relating to the proposed establishment of a bank in Ireland. The following anecdote is also recorded on the same subject:—

"When Swift was at Holyhead, waiting for a fair wind to sail for Ireland, one Welldon, an old seafaring man, sent him a letter that he had found out the longitude, and would convince him of it; to which the Dean answered, in writing, that if he had found it out, he must apply to the Lords of Admiralty, of whom, perhaps, one might be found who knew something of navigation, of which he was totally ignorant; and that he never knew but two projectors, one of whom, (meaning his uncle Godwin,) ruined himself and family, and the other hanged himself; and desired him to desist, lest one or other might happen to him."—Swiftiana, London, 1804, 12mo, vol. I. p. 177. The other unfortunate projector was probably Joseph Beaumont, often mentioned in Swift's Journal, who committed suicide.

Digitized by Google

1667, two years after his appointment, leaving an infant daughter, and his widow, then pregnant, in a very destitute situation,* as Mrs. Swift was unable, without the assistance of the society, even to defray the expense of her husband's funeral.

Dryden William Swift, the brother of the deceased, seems to have been active in behalf of his sister-in-law, but Godwin, who was supposed to be wealthy, was her chief support; and, upon the 30th of November 1667,

* The following original documents, procured by the kindness of Mr. Hartstonage, establish the time of his appointment and death, and also the destitute circumstances of the poet's mother. As Mr. Swift states himself to have been conversant about the King's Inns for six or seven years before the date of his petition, it is probable that he came to Ireland upon the death of his father, 1658.

"To his Grace the Lord Chancellor, the Right Honourable the Judges, and other the Honourable Benchers of the Honourable Society of the King's Inns, Dublin:

"The humble Petition of Jonathan Swift;

"Humbly sheweth,

"That the stewardship of this Honourable Society is now become void by the death of Thomas Wale, the late steward thereof: That your petitioner, his father, and their whole family, have been always very loyal and faithful to his said Majesty and his royal father, and have been very great sufferers upon that account: That your petitioner, for these six or seven years last past, hath been much conversant about the said Inns, and is very well acquainted with the duty and employment belonging unto the steward thereof, he having assisted the said Thomas Wale in entering of the orders of your honours, and in the settling and ordering other things belonging to the said employment.

"That your petitioner doubts not but if your honours will be pleased to confer the said employment of steward upon your petitioner, that he shall give your honours all satisfaction imaginable therein.

"He therefore humbly prays that your honours will be pleased to confirm the said stewardship upon him.

And he shall pray."

[Extracted from the Black-book of the King's Inns, in the library, Henrietta Street, Dublin, p. 242.]

I compared the above extracts with Mr. Hartstonge, and can certify its correctness with the original.

B. T. DUHIGG,

Librarian to the Honourable Society of King's Inns, Dublin, Dec. 24th, 1819.

Presented to a Council held at the King's Inns, Dublin, 14th Nov. 1665.

Digitized by Google

being St. Andrew's day, she was delivered of the celebrated Jonathan Swift. The place of his birth was a

"At a Council holden at the King's Inns, Dublin, the 25th day of January, 1665-6,

[Amongst other matters it was]

"Ordered

"That Jonathan Swift, upon his petition, be admitted steward of this house.

[Signed]

"Michl. Dublin, Can.
J. Temple, [Master of the Rolls.]
W. Aston, [puisne Justice of the King's Bench.]
Jn. Bysse, [Chief Baron.]
Robt. Kennedy, [Baron of the Exchequer.]
Jerome Alexander, [p. Justice of the Common Pleas."]

I also compared the above,

B. T. DUHIGG.

The period of the death of the above-mentioned Mr. Jonathan Swift is fully ascertained, by the following petition of his widow, Mrs. Abigail Swift, to the Honourable Society of King's Inns, presented at a council held the 15th of April 1667.

"To his Grace the Lord Chancellor, and the Right Honourable the Judges and Benchers of the Honourable Society of King's Inns:

"The humble Petition of Abigail Swift, widow;

"Humbly sheweth,

"That it having pleased God to take away your petitioner's husband, the late steward of this honourable Society, unexpectedly, and your petitioner being left a disconsolate widow, hath this affliction added to her, that there is due to her from the several members of this honourable Society, for Commons and Cost Commons, about six score pounds sterling, which she is noways able to get in without your honours' assistance: That your petitioner hath desired her late husband's brother, William Swift, to help her in getting in her said money, who hath manifested himself very willing to assist her, but hath been denied by several persons, upon pretence that he had no authority to receive the same.

"Now, for as much as your petitioner hath no friend next your honours, but her said brother, to rely upon, and that he, your petitioner's said brother, cannot befriend her without he be authorized by your honours' orders to the purpose,

"May it therefore please your honours to grant your petitioner an order, wherein the said William Swift may be authorized and appointed to gather in your petitioner's said money.

"And your petitioner shall ever pray."

[The prayer of which petition was fully granted upon the same day, and her brother-in-law appointed to receive the moneys due.]

Digitized by Google

small house, now called No. 7, in Hoey's Court, Dublin, which is still pointed out by the inhabitants of that quarter.* His infancy was marked by a chance as singular as that of his father, whose cradle had been plundered of the bedding by Kirle's troopers. The nurse to whom he was committed was a native of Whitehaven, to which town she was recalled, by the commands of a dying relation, from whom she expected a legacy. She actually stole away her charge, out of mere affection, and carried him to Whitehaven, where he resided three years; for his health was so delicate, that rather than hazard a second voyage, his mother chose to fix his residence for a time with the female who had given such a singular proof of her attachment. The nurse was so careful of the child's education, that when he returned to Dublin he was able to spell, and when five years old he could read any chapter of the Bible.

Swift was now to share the indigence of a mother whom he tenderly loved, and to subsist upon the sup-

[Extracted from the Black-book of the King's Inns, Dublin, page 248.] I also compared the above,

B. T. DUHIGG.

I have seen another original petition from Mrs. Abigail Swift, presented in council to the Society of King's Inns, in the month of January, less than two months after the birth of her son, which was on the 30th of November 1667. I am thus irresistibly convinced, and entirely concur in opinion with Mr. Duhigg, (see his history of the King's Inns, p. 248,) that the illustrious Jonathan Swift, the Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, was undoubtedly born in Ireland. This latter petition, here noticed, is in the Black-book of the King's Inns, Dublin, p. 276, which states her poverty, and her desire to pay the funeral expenses of her late husband, and praying that the society do pay her the arrears due, &c.

MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE.

I compared the above with Mr. Hartstonge,

B. T. DUHIGG.

Entry on the King's Inns Roll.

"On the 26th of January 1665, Jonathan Swift was admitted into this Society."

[Black-book of the King's Inns, p. 197.]

* The antiquity of its appearance seems to vindicate the truth of the tradition. In 1809 it was occupied by Mrs. Jackson, a dealer in earthen-ware.

Digitized by Google

port afforded by his uncle Godwin. It seems probable, that these irritating and degrading circumstances sunk deep into his haughty temper, even at an early period of life, and that even then commenced that war of his spirit with the world, which only ended when his faculties were utterly subdued by disease. Born a posthumous child, and bred up as an object of charity, he early adopted the custom of observing his birth-day, as a term, not of joy, but of sorrow, and of reading, when it annually recurred, the striking passage of Scripture, in which Job laments and execrates the day upon which it was said in his father's house, "that a man-child was born." The narrowness of the allowance afforded for his maintenance and education, added to his unhappiness, and was naturally imputed by him to the sordid parsimony of his uncle. It is true, that subsequent events showed that Godwin Swift was under the necessity of regulating his allowance by the real state of his embarrassed circumstances, rather than by the opinion which his nephew, in common with the rest of the world, entertained of his wealth. But although it was afterwards discovered, that his liberality had borne full proportion to the former criterion, Swift appears never to have lost the unfavourable impression which had once been made, and certainly held Godwin Swift's remembrance neither in love nor veneration.*

* He mentions him with disrespect in the anecdotes of the family, and elsewhere; and I have the following remarkable anecdote from Theophilus Swift, Esq. the grandson of Godwin, and grand-nephew of the Dean, to whom it was often related by Mrs. Whiteway. The Rev. Dr. Whittingham, Archdeacon of Dublin, a bold and ready talker, used to be forward to show his colloquial courage where few would have chosen to exercise it, by attacking Dean Swift, and that with great rudeness and severity. At a visitation dinner, they chanced to be placed nearly opposite to each other at table, when Dr. Whittingham suddenly asked, "Pray, Mr. Dean, was it not your uncle Godwin who educated you?"—Swift affected not to hear this insulting question. At length it was twice repeated, with a loud and bitter accent, when the Dean answered abruptly, "Yes! He gave me the education of a dog."—"Then," answered Whittingham, grinning, and clenching his hand, "you have not the gratitude of a dog." The instant interposition of the Bishop prevented the personal violence which was likely to follow on this colloquy. This story is alluded to by Dr. Delany, in his sixteenth letter to

Digitized by Google

Meanwhile his education proceeded apace. At the age of six years, he was sent to the school of Kilkenny, endowed and maintained by the Ormond family, where his name, cut in schoolboy fashion, upon his desk or form, is still shown to strangers. Here he learned to say, *latine-anglicè*, the words *Mi dux et amasti lux*, the first germ of the numerous *jeux d'esprit* of that nature which passing between him and Sheridan, during his declining years.

From Kilkenny, Swift was removed, at the age of 14, and admitted into Trinity College, Dublin, where, as appears from the book of the senior lecturers, he was received as a pensioner under the tuition of St. George Ashe, on 24th April 1682. His cousin, Thomas Swift,* was admitted at the same time; and the mention of the two names throughout the College records, without the Christian appellative, has thrown uncertainty upon some minute points of the Dean's biography.

When Swift was entered at the University, the usual studies of the period were required of him, and of these, some were very ill suited to his genius. Logic, then deemed a principal object of learning, was in vain presented to his notice; for his disposition altogether rejected the learned sophistry of Smiglecius, Keckermannus, Burgersdicius, and other ponderous worthies now hardly known by name; nor could his tutor ever persuade him to read three pages in one of them, though some acquaintance with the commentators of Aristotle was absolutely necessary at passing examination for his degrees. Neither did he pay regular attention to other studies more congenial to his disposition. He read and studied rather for amusement, and to divert melancholy reflections, than with the zeal of acquiring knowledge.

Lord Orrery, but the circumstances are concealed and altered. Notwithstanding the violence of this altercation, the Dean and Archdeacon Whittingham were reconciled by the interference of the Bishop, and became afterwards good friends.

* Son to his uncle Thomas, who had been bred at Oxford. Swift's college-companion afterwards became Rector of Puttenham in Surrey, and affected to have a share in the original concoction of the Tale of a Tub. Swift used to call him in contempt, his "parson-cousin."

Digitized by Google

But his reading, however desultory, must have been varied and extensive, since he is said to have already drawn a rough sketch of the Tale of a Tub, which he communicated to his companion Mr. Waryng.* We must conclude then, that a mere idler of the 17th century might acquire, in his hours of careless and irregular reading, a degree of knowledge which would startle a severe student of the present age. We have few means of judging of the extent of Swift's real learning; it cannot perhaps be termed profound, but it was certainly extensive. His writings evince great general acquaintance with history and poetry, both ancient and modern; nor is he ever at a loss for such classical allusions and quotations as most aptly illustrate the matter of which he treats. Yet although he thought so lightly of his own acquisitions, that he talked of having lost degree for dulness and insufficiency, and although he used with great vehemence to rebuke those who bestowed the name of scholar on any one whom they could not prove to have spent most of his days in study, the character of a mere plodding student did not stand high in his estimation. Bentley, whom he unjustly ranked in this dull and laborious class, used to be honoured with the epithets of *Jubar Anglicanum*, *Lux Britanniæ*, *Sidus Britannicum*, &c. by the foreign literati. This Swift could not bear, and in the predictions of Isaac Bickerstaff, he launches some satirical shafts at the heavy politeness of the High-Dutch *illustrissimi*, and their extravagant compliments to each other.†

While Swift, however, was pursuing his studies in this vague and desultory manner, they would have been

* This fact Mr. Waryng often mentioned to Mr. Whiteway.

† "If I had leave to have printed the Latin letters transmitted to me from foreign parts, they would fill a volume, and be a full defence against all that Mr. Partridge and all his accomplices of the Portugal Inquisition will be ever able to object; which, by the way, are the only enemies my predictions have ever met with at home or abroad. The most learned Monsieur Leibnitz thus addresses to me his third letter: *Illustrissimo Bickerstaffio astrologiæ instauratori*, &c. Monsieur Le Clerc, quoting my predictions in a treatise he published last year, is pleased to say, *Ita nuperrime Bickerstaffius magnum illud Angliæ sidus.*" VIII. 492.

Digitized by Google

altogether interrupted by the death of his uncle Godwin and the derangement of his affairs, which then first became public, had he not found another patron in his uncle Dryden William Swift. This gentleman gave the necessary support to his orphan nephew, and it would seem with more grace and apparent kindness, though not more liberally in amount than his brother Godwin, for he too was in narrow circumstances. But Swift always cherished his memory, and recorded him as the "best of his relations." He used also to mention an incident which occurred while he was at college, of which Willoughby Swift, his cousin, the son of Dryden William, was the hero. Sitting one day in his chamber, absolutely penniless, he saw a seaman in the court below, who seemed enquiring for the apartment of one of the students. It occurred to Swift that this man might bring a message from his cousin Willoughby, then settled as a Lisbon merchant, and the thought scarcely had crossed his mind when the door opened, and the stranger approaching him, produced a large leathern purse of silver coin, and poured the contents before him, as a present from his cousin. Swift, in his ecstasy, offered the bearer a part of his treasure, which the honest sailor generously declined. And from that moment, Swift, who had so deeply experienced the miseries of indigence, resolved so to manage his scanty income, as never again to be reduced to extremity. The system by which he regulated his expense was so very rigid, that, from many of his journals still existing, it is clear he could have accounted for every penny of his expenditure, during any year of his life, from the time of his being at college, until the total decline of his faculties.

Pleasure, as well as necessity, interfered with Swift's studies. Poverty, and the sense of the contempt which accompanies it, often gives to a lofty temper a cast of recklessness and desperation, and Swift's mind was by one of his friends well likened to an evoked spirit, that would do mischief if not supplied with constant employment. Johnson, who studied at college under similar disadvantages, has expressed such feelings in his own nervous language. Hearing from Mr. Boswell that he

Digitized by Google

had been considered as a gay and frolicsome fellow, while at Pembroke, he answered, "Ah! Sir, I was mad and violent. It was bitterness that they mistook for frolic. I was miserably poor, and I thought to fight my way by my literature and my wit; so I disregarded all power, and all authority." Even such a rebel against college discipline Swift appears to have been, under similar circumstances; and it is remarkable, that, though far inferior in humour, in purity of style, and in comprehensive genius, Johnson bore a strong resemblance, in his morbid temperament, political opinions, and habits of domination in private society, to the Dean of St. Patrick's. Swift, therefore, while under the dominion of this untamed spirit, was guilty of many irregularities, some which occasioned reproof, and some which led to yet more severe consequences. He repeatedly neglected, and affected to contemn the discipline of the college, and frequented taverns and coffee-houses. In the wantonness of his wit, he assailed the fellows of the University with satirical effusions, to which the speeches occasionally delivered by the *Terræ Filius*, gave sufficient scope. But though this species of saturnalia had a prescriptive license, experience might have taught Swift that it was not to be relied on, and that the individual ridiculed watched his time and opportunity to retort upon the satirist the pain which he had inflicted. The earlier part of Swift's academical course was more slightly marked with these irregularities, for no record of penal infliction occurs, until a *special grace* for the degree of Bachelor of Arts was conferred upon him, on 13th February, 1685–6. We are not therefore to look for the cause of the degrading manner in which this degree was bestowed, (as flowing, not from the merit of the student, but the unearned favour of the University,) in Swift's irregularities, but in the neglect of those studies which were then held essential parts of education. In going through the preliminary dissertation, he was ignorant even of the necessary syllogistic forms. He answered the arguments of the impugners in common language, and the proctor reduced his replies into syllogism, the candidate thus displaying a degree of ignorance of what

Digitized by Google

was then miscalled the art of reasoning, which must of itself have called for the mark of incapacity which was attached to his degree. Yet such was the strength of Swift's memory, that, after thirty or forty years, he could repeat to Sheridan the propositions, as they were attacked and defended, in their proper scholastic technicality.

The disgraceful note with which his degree had been granted, probably added to Swift's negligence, and gave edge to his satirical propensities. Between the periods of 14th November 1685, and 8th October 1687, he incurred no less than seventy penalties for non-attendance at chapel, for neglecting lectures, for being absent from the evening roll-call, and for town-haunting, which is the academical phrase for absence from college without license. At length these irregularities called forth a more solemn censure, for, on 18th March 1686-7, with his cousin, Thomas Swift, his chum, Mr. Warren, and four others, he incurred the disgrace of a public admonition for notorious neglect of duties. His second public punishment was of a nature yet more degrading. On 20th November 1688, Swift, the future oracle of Ireland, was, by a sentence of the Vice-Provost, and senior fellows of the University, convicted of insolent conduct towards the junior Dean, (Owen Lloyd,) and of exciting dissension within the walls of the college. He shared with two companions the suspension of his academical degree, and two of the delinquents, Swift being one, further were sentenced to crave public pardon of the junior Dean.* The bitterness of spirit with which

* Such is the account of this matter inferred by the late Dr. Barrett from the college records; and his acquaintance with the mode of keeping them, and the purposes for which they are made up, entitle his judgment to the greatest weight. His opinion is also confirmed by that of Mr. Theophilus Swift, who expresses his conviction, that, in consequence of his share in the academical satires upon the Fellows of Trinity College, Swift was in danger of losing the testimonium of his degree, without which he could not have been admitted *ad eundem* at Oxford. And he supposes that, mortified at the recollection of the humiliating conditions imposed as his terms of pardon, his great kinsman was not unwilling that the particulars of the case should be sunk in a general report, that he had been re-

Digitized by Google

Swift submitted to this despotic infliction, if indeed he obeyed it, for of this there is no absolute proof, may be more easily conceived than described. The sense of his resentment shows itself in the dislike which he exhibits to his Alma Mater, the Trinity College of Dublin, and the satirical severity with which he persecutes Dr. Owen Lloyd, the junior Dean, before whom he had been ordained to make this unworthy prostration.*

This unpleasant circumstance of the Dean's academical life, has become gradually confounded with the yet more severe penalty of expulsion, inflicted upon John Jones, one of his companions. Mr. Richardson has recorded a tradition, that Swift was expelled from college for writing a Tripos, as it is called, or satirical oration, uttered by him as Terræ-Filius.† The research of the

fused his degree for insufficiency,—a mode of stating the fact, which was likely to throw more discredit on the discernment of the heads of the university, than on his own acknowledged talents. Yet an ingenious correspondent has alleged the following reasons, to prove that this degrading ceremony never was submitted to.

"From Dr. Barrett's Life of Swift, it appears that he graduated above a year *before* the usual time, which in Trinity College, Dublin, is four years and a half, therefore *speciali gratia* must mean that he got it by interest or merit; or, if it was suspended after, as Dr. B. suggests, it might have been restored to him on intercession of friends. But there appears little to countenance the supposition, that he was ordered to beg pardon on his knees, and nothing to warrant the assertion that he *submitted* to such an indignity, as there is no trace of his remaining in college after the revolution, which is the date Dr. B. assigns for that censure. The dates are very confused and contradictory as to the two Swifts; and, while he allows Thomas Swift to have had a scholarship, and suspects that Jonathan had not, he forgets that very few ever remain in Trinity College, Dublin, after graduating, unless they enjoy scholarships; and that Jonathan Swift had one, appears further from his remaining in Commons, and being, according to Dr. B., suspended from Commons, by way of punishment, after graduating, which could be no punishment at all to him, if his Commons were not at the charge of the University."

* See the Works of Jonathan Swift, to which these Memoirs are prefixed, Vol. IV. p. 13, where Dr. Lloyd is said to have been bribed by a Deanery to take a cast-mistress off the hands of Lord Wharton.

† Vol. VI. page 171. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh, April 22, 1752.—"I am told my Lord (Orrery) is mistaken in some of his facts; for instance, in that wherein he asserts, that Swift's learning was a late acquirement. I am very well warranted by the son of

Digitized by Google

learned Dr. Barrett has ascertained, that such a tripos was actually delivered, 11th July 1688. He had published its contents, which are preserved in the Lanesborough MS., and he has proved, from the college records, that Jones, the Terræ-Filius of the period, was actually deprived of his degree, for the false and scandalous reflections contained in that satire, though the sentence was afterwards mitigated into a temporary suspension of his degree and academical rights. But Jones, not Swift, was the Terræ-Filius so degraded. The inaccuracy of Richardson's informer may be easily pardoned: he was recollecting the events of a remote period, when Swift and Jones, friends and associates, both experienced punishment for petulant satire and insubordination. It is not, therefore, wonderful, that he confounded the circumstances attending their delinquencies, and attributed the more weighty offence, an offence, too, of which Swift was likely to have been guilty, and the more severe punishment, to him who afterwards became the object of general attention. It is probable, likewise, that the tripos may have been heightened by the satirical strokes of Swift; though I cannot think it likely that he was the principal author of the work, for which Jones sustained the sentence of expulsion, since, with all his grossness, it exhibits little of his humour.

In 1688, the war broke out in Ireland; and Swift, then in his twenty-first year, without money, and if not without learning, at least without the reputation of possessing it, with the stains of turbulence and insubordination attached to his character, and without a single friend to protect, receive, or maintain him, left the Col-

an eminent divine, a prelate, who was for three years what is called his chum, in the following account of that fact. Dr. Swift made as great a progress in his learning at the University of Dublin in his youth, as any of his contemporaries; but was so very ill-natured and troublesome, that he was made Terræ-Filius, on purpose to have a pretence to expel him. He raked up all the scandal against the heads of that university, that a severe enquirer, and a still severer temper, could get together into his harangue. He was expelled in consequence of his abuse; and having his *discessit*, afterwards got admitted at Oxford to his degree."

Digitized by Google

lege of Dublin. Guided, it may be supposed, more by affection than hope, he bent his course to England, and travelled on foot to his mother's residence, who was then in Leicestershire. Herself in a dependent and precarious situation, Mrs. Swift could only recommend to her son to solicit the patronage of Sir William Temple, whose lady was her relation, and had been well acquainted with the family of the Swifts, and in whose house Thomas Swift, the cousin of our author, had already resided as a chaplain.

The application was made, and succeeded; but for some time Sir William Temple's patronage seemed to be unattended either by confidence or affection. The accomplished statesman, and polite scholar, was probably, for a time, unreconciled to the irritable habits, and imperfect learning of his new inmate.* But Sir William's prejudices became gradually weaker, as Swift's exquisite power of observation increased his faculties of pleasing, while his knowledge was expanded by a course of study so hard, that it engaged eight hours of every day. Such a space of time, well employed, soon rendered a man of Swift's powers an invaluable treasure

* In the letter to Lady Bradshaigh, already quoted, Richardson says, "Mr. Temple, nephew to Sir William Temple, and brother to Lord Palmerston, who lately died at Bath, declared to a friend of mine, that Sir William hired Swift, at his first entrance into the world, to read to him, and sometimes to be his amanuensis, at the rate of *L.*20 a-year and his board, which was then high preferment to him; but that Sir William never favoured him with his conversation because of his ill qualities, nor allowed him to sit down at table with him. Swift, your ladyship will easily see, by his writings, had bitterness, satire, moroseness, that must make him unsufferable to his equals and inferiors, and unsafe for his superiors to countenance. Sir William Temple was a wise and discerning man. He could easily see through a young fellow, taken into a low office, and inclined to forget himself. Probably too, the Dean was always unpolite, and never could be a man of breeding. Sir William Temple was one of the politest men of his time."—*Richardson's Correspondence*, VI. 173. The outlines of this unfavourable statement are probably true, if restricted to the earlier part of Swift's residence at Moorpark. But we must not forget, that the enmity which subsisted between him and all the descendants of Sir William Temple, may account for Mr. Temple's placing his conduct in a disreputable light.

Digitized by Google

to a patron like Temple, with whom he remained about two years. His studies were partially interrupted by bad health. He had contracted, from a surfeit of stone-fruit, a giddiness and coldness of stomach, which almost brought him to his grave, and the effects of which he felt during his whole life-time.* At one time he was so ill that he visited Ireland, in hopes of experiencing benefit from his native air; but finding no advantage

* It here becomes the indispensable duty of an editor, briefly to notice the opinion expressed by the learned Dr. Beddoes, who, in the ninth essay of his work, entitled Hygeia, has directly ascribed the vertigo of Swift, with all its distressing consequences, to habits of early and profligate indulgence. And he has argued upon our author's conduct towards Stella and Vanessa, as indicating the inflamed imagination, and the exhausted frame of a premature voluptuary, who still courted pleasures he was unable to enjoy. The same conclusion, Dr. Beddoes is disposed to derive, from the tone of gross indelicacy, of which Swift's writings afford too many proofs. To the hypothesis of this ingenious writer, we may oppose, first, the express declaration of Swift himself, that this distressing malady originated in the surfeit mentioned in the text, a cause which medical professors have esteemed in every respect adequate to produce such consequences. Secondly, His whole intercourse with Stella and Vanessa, indicates the very reverse of an ardent or licentious imagination; and proves his coldness to have been constitutionally inherent, both in mind and person, and utterly distinct from that of one who retains wishes which he has lost the power to gratify. Those who choose to investigate this matter further, may compare Swift's Journal to Stella, with Pope's Letters to the Miss Blounts, in which there really exists evidence of that mixture of friendship, passion, and licentious gallantry, which the learned author of Hygeia has less justly ascribed to the correspondence between Swift and Stella. Lastly, Without raking deeper into such a subject, it may be briefly noticed, that the coarse images and descriptions with which Swift has dishonoured his pages, are of a nature directly opposite to the loose impurities by which the exhausted voluptuary feeds his imagination. The latter courts the seductive images of licentious pleasure; but Swift has indulged in pictures of a very different class, and has dwelt on physical impurities, calculated to disgust, and not to excite the fancy. We may, therefore, safely take Swift's word for the origin of his malady, as well as for his constitutional temperance. And, until medical authors can clearly account for, and radically cure the diseases of their contemporary patients, they may readily be excused from assigning dishonourable causes for the disorders of the illustrious dead.

The following receipt for his malady, by the celebrated Dr. Ratcliffe, was found among Mr. Smith's papers, endorsed in the Dean's hand:—

Digitized by Google

from the change, he again returned to Moorpark, and employed in his studies the intervals which his disorder afforded. It was now that he experienced marks of confidence from Temple, who permitted him to be present at his confidential interviews with King William, when that monarch honoured Moorpark with his visits, a distinction which Temple owed to their former intimacy in Holland, and which he received with respectful ease, and repaid by sound and constitutional advice. Nay, when Sir William's gout confined him to his chamber, the duty of attending the King devolved upon Swift; and it is recorded by all the poet's biographers, that William offered him a troop of horse, and showed him how to cut asparagus the Dutch way. It would be unjust to suppress the additional advantage he acquired in learning, by the royal example, to eat the same vegetable with Dutch economy, on which subject the reader will find a lively anecdote at the bottom of the page.*

"R. *Nov.* 3*d*, 1733. *Dr. Ratcliff's Rec*t. *for Deafness, sent by my Lady Moncastell.*

"Doctor Ratcliff's prescription for a noisse in the head and deffness, proceeding from a cold moyst humor in the head.

"Take a pint of sack whay, make very clear, halfe sack and halfe water, boyle in it sum plain reael sage, and a sprige of Rossmery; take it gowing to rest, with thirty or forty drops of spirit of hartshorn, continue it as long as you find benifet by it, expecily the wintor seson; he may swetn or not with sirop of Cowslep. He orderd allsoe a spice capp: to be made of clowes, masse, and *pepper mingled finely*, pownded and put betwen too silke, and quelted to wear next the head, and for a man to be sowdd within side his wigg."

* This characteristic story is given on the authority of the father of my friend, Mr. M. Weld Hartstonge. Alderman George Faulkner of Dublin, the well-known bookseller, happening one day to dine in company with Dr. Leland the historian, the conversation adverted to the illustrious Dean of St. Patrick's. Faulkner, who was the Dean's printer and publisher on many occasions, mentioned, that one day being detained late at the Deanery-house, in correcting some proof-sheets for the press, Swift made the worthy alderman stay to dinner. Amongst other vegetables, asparagus formed one of the dishes. The Dean helped his guest, who shortly again called upon his host to be helped a second time; when the Dean, pointing to the alderman's plate, "Sir, first finish what you have upon your plate."—"What, sir, eat my stalks?"—"Ay, sir! King William always eat the stalks!"—"And George," rejoined the his-

Digitized by Google

Other advantages of a more solid nature were, however, held out to his ambition; and he was led to hope that he would be provided for in the church, to which profession he was destined, as well by inclination as by so fair a prospect of preferment.* The high trust reposed in him warranted these hopes. For he was employed by Sir William Temple to lay before King William the reasons why his Majesty ought to assent to the bill for triennial parliaments; and he strengthened Temple's opinion by several arguments drawn from English history. But the King persevered in his opposition, and the bill was thrown out by the influence of the Crown, in the House of Commons. This was the first intercourse that Swift had with courts; and he was wont to tell his friends that it helped to cure him of vanity: having probably anticipated success in his negotiation, and being mortified in proportion by its unexpected failure.

In 1692, Swift went to Oxford for the purpose of taking his master's degree, to which he was admitted on the 5th July in that year. He seems to have been pleased with the civilities he met at Oxford, and observes, that he was ashamed to have been more obliged, in a few weeks, to strangers, than ever he was, in seven years, to Dublin college.† The favour of Oxford necessarily implies learning and genius. In the former Swift was now eminent, and in the latter showed the fair promise of an active and enterprising mind. Even

torian, (who was himself remarkably proud, and very pompous,) "what, were you blockhead enough to obey him?"—"Yes, doctor, and if you had dined with Dean Swift, *tete-a-tete*, faith, you would have been obliged to eat your stalks too!"

* He writes to his uncle, William Swift, 29th November 1692, "I am not to take orders till the King gives me a prebend." See his Works, Vol. XV. p. 257.

† The passage reminds us of a similar expression in Dryden's prologue to the University of Oxford,

> Oxford to him a dearer name shall be
> Than his own mother university;
> Thebes did his green unknowing youth engage,
> He chooses Athens in his riper age.

Both poets had received some censure from their Alma Mater.

Digitized by Google

in 1691, he informs his friend, Mr. Kendal, that he had "written, and burned, and written again upon all manner of subjects, more than perhaps any man in England."* Amidst these miscellaneous efforts, poetry was not neglected. The muses met him on their own sacred ground, and it is at Oxford that Swift produced his first verses, (reserving only his claim to any of those contained in the Tripos of Jones.) It is a version of Horace, Book II. Ode 18,† which will be found in its place:

'Tis true, my cottage, mean and low,
Not built for grandeur, but for ease,
No ivory cornices can show,
Nor ceilings rough with gold displays.

No cedar beams for pomp and state,
(To nature names confest unknown,)
Repose their great and precious weight
On pillars of the Parian stone.

Not dropt an accidental heir
To some old kinless miser's means;
No wealthy vassal's gifts I wear,
Rich purple vests, and sweeping trains;

But virtue and a little sense,
Have so endear'd me to the great,
That, thanks to bounteous Providence,
Nor have, nor want I, an estate.

Blest in my little Sabine field,
I'll neither gods above implore,
Nor, since in sneaking arts unskill'd,
Hang on my wealthy friends for more.

From day to day, with equal pace,
Our sliding moments steal away,
Nor is the fleeting moon's increase
Aught but her progress to decay.

Yet you, amused with airy dreams,
Forgetful that the grave is near,
Are busied with your endless schemes
Of pleasant seats and houses here.

* Swift's Works, Vol. XV. p. 252.

† These verses were copied by Dr. Hill of Dublin, from the original in the possession of Mr. Worrall, who was one of the Dean's curates, and lived in great habits of friendship with him.

Digitized by Google

The bounds of nature for your mind
Too little seem, and you are poor,
Unless the ocean be confined
T' enlarge your borders on the shore.

Nay, more, profanely you leap o'er
Your peaceful neighbour's ancient bounds,
Invade the weak, unfriended poor,
And seize his patrimonial grounds.

Expell'd by you from their abodes,
The tender wife and husband fly,
In vain they invocate their gods,
In vain their helpless infants cry.

And yet this dearly bought estate
How quickly must its owner leave!
The wealthy miser's last retreat,
And surest portion, is the grave.

What would you more? impartial earth
Wraps in her lap with equal care
The high and low, nor royal birth
Preserves its poor distinctions there.

Not all Prometheus' boasted art
Could ever surly Charon sway,
Nor gold itself work on his heart,
To wake him back into the day.

Proud Tantalus, and all his race,
He holds in chains; the royal kin
In vain implores the smallest grace,
No patient empire his for sin.

Yet, call'd or not, the poor he hears,
And in his last and painful strife,
To his assistance strait repairs,
And carries off his load of life.

Besides these verses, we find Swift attempting another style of poetical composition less favourable to his fame. This produced his Pindaric Odes, the only kind of writing which he seriously attempted without attaining excellence, and which must therefore be accounted among the injudicious efforts of a genius which had not yet become acquainted with its own powers. The undertaking is said to have been pressed upon him by Sir William and Lady Temple, who were admirers of Cow-

Digitized by Google

ley. But it is reasonable enough to suppose that Swift should have turned voluntarily towards that kind of metaphysical poetry, in which wit (if wit consists in presenting unexpected and ingenious combinations) is the leading and distinguishing feature; and, after all the vituperation which has been heaped upon these odes, they are not, generally speaking, worse than the pindarics of Donne and Cowley, which, in the earlier part of the century, gained these authors unbounded applause. It is said that Swift communicated these poetical exercises to Dryden, whose concise reply,—"Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet,"—he neither forgot nor pardoned. One of the Odes is inscribed to the Athenian Society,* in strains of eulogy of which Swift must have been afterwards ashamed, when he recollected that the Apollo of this English Athens was no other than John Dunton the bookseller. With the exception of these abortive attempts at a species of poetry of which the fashion had passed away, it does not appear that Swift made any efforts towards literary distinction; for the verses addressed to Congreve, November 1693, and those to Sir William Temple, in December following, seem to have been the effusions of private friendship. From the first we learn, that Swift's talents had raised him above the obscurity which attended his first years at Moorpark, and that he was now on friendly terms with Congreve, a man of the brightest comic genius that Britain has produced. The same verses teach us, that he already felt confidence in his powers of satire, and could predict the effects of that "hate to fools," which he afterwards assumed as his principal characteristic.

> "My hate—whose lash just Heaven had long decreed,
> Shall on a day make sin and folly bleed."

The verses on Sir William Temple's illness and recovery, are of a different mood, and express strongly and pathetically the miseries of the precarious situation under which his proud and independent spirit was then

* Swift's Works, Vol. XIV. p. 23.

Digitized by Google

struggling. He thus addresses his Muse, which, since Cowley's time, was the established mode in which a poet expressed his complaints:—

"Wert thou right woman, thou should'st scorn to look
On an abandon'd wretch, by hopes forsook;
Forsook by hopes, ill fortune's last relief,
Assign'd for life to unremitting grief;
For let Heaven's wrath enlarge these weary days,
If hope e'er dawn the smallest of its rays,
Time o'er the happy takes so swift a flight,
And treads so soft, so easy, and so light,
That we the wretched, creeping far behind,
Can scarce th' impression of his footsteps find.——
— — — — — —
To thee I owe that fatal bent of mind,
Still to unhappy restless thoughts inclined;
To thee, what oft I vainly strive to hide,
That scorn of fools, by fools mistook for pride;
From thee whatever virtue takes its rise,
Grows a misfortune, or becomes a vice;
Such were thy rules to be poetically great:—
'Stoop not to interest, flattery, or deceit;
Nor with hired thoughts be thy devotion paid;
Learn to disdain their mercenary aid;
Be this thy sure defence, thy brazen wall,
Know no base action, at no guilt look pale;
And since unhappy distance thus denies
T' expose thy soul, clad in this poor disguise;
Since thy few ill-presented graces seem
To breed contempt where thou hast hoped esteem.'"

These last lines probably allude to the coldness of Sir William Temple, and to a disagreement which began to take place between them. Swift sighed after independence, and seems to have thought that Temple delayed providing for him, from the selfish view of retaining his assistance, now become necessary to him. Temple, on the other hand, regarded his dependent's impatience as if tinctured with ingratitude. He offered him, but with coldness, an employment worth £100 a-year, in the office of the rolls in Ireland, of which he was then master. To this Swift answered, that since this offer relieved him from the charge of being driven into the church for a maintenance, he was resolved to go to Ireland to take holy orders. And thus they parted in mutual displeasure: Temple positively refusing

Digitized by Google

to pledge himself by any promise of provision, in the event of his consenting to remain with him; and Swift determined to exert and maintain his independence.

When Swift arrived in Ireland, he found that the bishops, to whom he applied for orders, required some certificate of his conduct during the time he had resided with Sir William Temple. This must have been a grating task; for to obtain such a testimonial, required both submission and entreaty; and, accordingly, Swift appears to have paused nearly five months before endeavouring to procure it.* The submission, however, was at length made, the entreaty listened to, and "Swift's penitentiary letter" formed, probably, the ground-work of reconciliation with his patron. Within less than twelve days after the date of that letter, he must have received the testimonial he desired, for his letters for deacon's orders are dated 18th October 1694, and those for priest's orders on the 13th January following.† It seems probable that Sir William Temple added to the certificate desired, some recommendation to Lord Capel, then Lord-deputy of Ireland; for, almost immediately upon taking orders, Swift obtained the prebend of Kilroot, in the diocese of Connor, worth about one hundred pounds a-year. To this small living he retired, and assumed the character of a country clergyman.

Swift's life at Kilroot, however, so different from that which he had led with Sir William Temple, where he shared the society of all that were ennobled, either by genius or birth, soon became insipid. In the meanwhile, Temple, who had learned, by the loss of Swift, his real value, became solicitous that he

* Swift's letter to his cousin, Deane Swift, is dated at Moorpark, 3d June 1694, and he then says he left Sir William Temple a month before. The penitentiary letter is dated 6th October following.

† Mr. Sheridan believed him to be ordained in the preceding September, but that he was mistaken is obvious from the letter to Sir William Temple, and from the dates of the official certificates of ordination, which are now before the editor.

Digitized by Google

should return to Moorpark. While Swift hesitated between relinquishing the mode of life which he had chosen, and returning to that which he had relinquished, his resolution appears to have been determined by a circumstance highly characteristic of his exalted benevolence. In an excursion from his habitation, he met a clergyman, with whom he formed an acquaintance, which proved him to be learned, modest, well-principled, the father of eight children, and a curate at the rate of forty pounds a-year. Without explaining his purpose, Swift borrowed this gentleman's black mare, having no horse of his own,—rode to Dublin, resigned the prebendary of Kilroot, and obtained a grant of it for this new friend. When he gave the presentation to the poor clergyman, he kept his eyes steadily fixed on the old man's face, which, at first, only expressed pleasure at finding himself preferred to a living; but when he found that it was that of his benefactor, who had resigned in his favour, his joy assumed so touching an expression of surprise and gratitude, that Swift, himself deeply affected, declared he had never experienced so much pleasure as at that moment. The poor clergyman, at Swift's departure, pressed upon him the black mare, which he did not choose to hurt him by refusing; and thus mounted, for the first time, on a horse of his own, with fourscore pounds in his purse, Swift again embarked for England, and resumed his situation at Moorpark, as Sir William Temple's confidential secretary.

These are the outlines of a transaction, upon which, long after Swift's death, malice or madness endeavoured to fix a construction fatal to his reputation. This scandalous falsehood is only mentioned here, that it may never be repeated on any future occasion.*

* In an edition of the Tatler in six volumes, 1786, executed with uncommon accuracy and care, there occurs a note upon No. 188, which, among other strictures on Swift's history, mentions the following alleged fact:—"Lord Wharton's remarkable words allude, not only to the odium Swift had contracted as the known or supposed author of the Tale of a Tub, &c. but they seem to

Digitized by Google

Swift returned to the house of Sir William Temple rather as a confidential friend, than as a dependent companion. The mark of kindness and confidence

point more particularly to a flagrant part of his criminality at Kilroot, not so generally known. A general account of this offence is all that is requisite here, and all that decency permits. In consequence of an attempt to ravish one of his parishioners, a farmer's daughter, Swift was carried before a magistrate of the name of Dobbs, (in whose family the examinations taken on the occasion are said to be still extant to this day,) and, to avoid the very serious consequences of this rash action, immediately resigned the prebend, and quitted the kingdom. This intelligence was communicated, and vouched as a fact well known in the parish even now, by one of Swift's successors in the living, and is rested on the authority of the present prebendary of Kilroot, February 6, 1785."

It was not to be supposed, that a charge so inconsistent with Swift's general character for virtue, religion, and temperance, should remain unanswered. Accordingly, a reply was addressed to the Editor of the Gentleman's Magazine, by Theophilus Swift, Esq., who was justly zealous for the honour of his great relative, but it was refused admission on account of its length. An answer is also to be found in Mr. Monck Berkeley's Reliques; and, in both cases, the advocates of Swift, or rather his vindicators, urge the utter improbability of the charge, considering the circumstances of the case. It was shown by Mr. Berkeley, that had such a criminal stigma ever stained the character of Swift, some allusions to it must have been found amid the profusion of personal slander with which, at one time, he was assailed, both in Britain and Ireland. It was further remarked, that had Swift been conscious of meriting such an imputation, his satire upon Dean Sawbridge, for a similar crime, (Swift's Works, Vol. XIV. p. 252.) argues little less than insanity in the author. To which it might have been added, that the same reproach is thrown by Swift on Sir John Browne, in one of the Drapiers. (See his Works, Vol. VII. pages 127, 149, 366.) Above all, the proofs of this strange allegation were loudly demanded at the hand of those who had made public a calumny unknown to the eagle-eyed slander of the age in which Swift lived. To these defiances, no formal answer was returned, but the story was suffered to remain upon record. That this most atrocious charge may no longer continue without an explicit contradiction, I here insert the origin of the calumny, upon the authority of the Rev. Dr. Hutcheson of Donaghadee.

The Rev. Mr. P——r, a successor of Dean Swift in the prebend of Kilroot, was the first circulator of this extraordinary story. He told the tale, among other public occasions, at the late excellent Bishop of Dromore's, who committed it to writing. His authority he alleged to be a Dean Dobbs, who, he stated, had informed him that informations were actually lodged before magistrates in the diocese of Down and Connor, for the alleged attempt at violation. But when the late ingenious Mr. Malone, and many other literary

Digitized by Google

which he had exhibited in relinquishing that independence after which he had longed so earnestly, marked at once the generosity and the kindness of his disposition, and Sir William was insensible to neither. He resided with that great man from his return to England in 1695, till Temple's death in 1699, scarce a cloud intervening to disturb the harmony of their friendship. A cold look from his patron, such was the veneration with which Swift regarded Temple, made him unhappy for days;* his faculties were devoted to his service, and, during his last decline, Swift registered, with pious fidelity, every change in his disorder; and concluded the Journal, "He died at one o'clock this morning, (27th January 1698-9,) and with him all that was good and amiable among men." From another memorandum, copied by Thomas Steele, Esq. junior, we have this further character by our author of his early pat-

gentlemen, began to press a closer examination of the alleged fact, the unfortunate narrator denied obstinately his having ever promulgated such a charge. And whether the whole story was the creation of incipient insanity, or whether he had felt the discredit attached to his tergiversation so acutely as to derange his understanding, it is certain the unfortunate Mr. P——r died raving mad, a patient in that very hospital for lunatics, established by Swift, against whom he had propagated this cruel calumny. Yet, although P——r thus fell a victim to his own rash assertions, or credulity, it has been supposed that this inexplicable figment did really originate with Dean Dobbs, and that he had been led into a mistake, by the initial letters, J. S. upon the alleged papers, which might apply to Jonathan Smedley, (to whom, indeed, the tale has been supposed properly to belong,) or to John Smith, as well as to Jonathan Swift. It is sufficient for Swift's vindication to observe, that he returned to Kilroot, after his resignation, and inducted his successor in face of the church and of the public; that he returned to Sir William Temple with as fair a character as when he had left him; that during all his public life, in England and Ireland, where he was the butt of a whole faction, this charge was never heard of; that when adduced so many years after his death, it was unsupported by aught but sturdy and general averment; and that the chief propagator of the calumny first retracted his assertions, and finally died insane.

* In the Journal to Stella, he says, "Don't you remember how I used to be in pain, when Sir William Temple would look cold and out of humour for three or four days, and I used to suspect a hundred reasons? I have plucked up my spirit since then, faith; he spoiled a fine gentleman."—S.

Digitized by Google

ron: "He was a person of the greatest wisdom, justice, liberality, politeness, eloquence, of his age and nation; the truest lover of his country, and one that deserved more from it by his eminent public services, than any man before or since: besides his great deserving of the commonwealth of learning; having been universally esteemed the most accomplished writer of his time."

Among the most acceptable services which Swift could render Temple during this period, was his powerful assistance in the dispute concerning the superiority of ancient or modern learning, in which his patron had taken an anxious share, and had experienced some rough treatment from Wotton. This controversy, with other foolish fashions, had passed to England from France, where Fontenelle and Perrault had first ventured to assert the cause of the moderns. Upon its merits it may be sufficient to observe, that the field of comparison is infinitely too wide to admit of precise parallels, or of accurate reasoning. In works of poetry and imagination, the precedence may be decidedly allotted to the ancients, owing to the superior beauties of their language, and because they were the first to employ these general and obvious funds of illustration, which can appear original in those only by whom they were first used. On the other hand, in physical science, which necessarily is gradually enlarging its bounds, both by painful research and casual discovery, and in ethics, where the moderns enjoy the advantages of a pure religion and more free polity, it seems that they have far outshone their predecessors. But there is an ardour in literary controversy which does not rest contented with a drawn-battle. The arguments in favour of the moderns were adopted in England by Mr. Wotton, in his Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning, and indignantly combated by Sir William Temple, in his treatise on the same subject. Among other works of the ancients on which he founded the plea of their pre-eminence, Temple unhappily referred to the Epistles of Phalaris, now generally regarded as spurious, but which he pronounced to exhibit "such diversity of

Digitized by Google

passion, such freedom of thought, such knowledge of life and contempt of death, as breathed in every line the tyrant and the commander." Wotton replied to this treatise, and was seconded by the learned Bentley, who had the double motive of detecting the spurious Phalaris, and of vindicating himself from the charge of incivility, respecting the loan of a manuscript from the King's library to the Honourable Mr. Boyle, then engaged in an edition of the Epistles. This gave occasion to the treatise called Boyle against Bentley, and to the reply of that profound scholar, known by the name of Bentley against Boyle. Swift felt doubly interested in this dispute, first, on account of the share his patron had in the controversy, and secondly, because the literati of Oxford, with whose conduct towards him he had been so highly satisfied, were united against Bentley, and in the cause of his antagonist. The Battle of the Books was the consequence of Swift's interest in behalf of Sir William Temple, and it was probably shown and handed about in manuscript during his lifetime, although it was not printed until some years afterwards. The idea is taken from Coutray's "Histoire Poetique de la Guerre novellement declarée entre les anciens et les modernes," a spirited poem, divided into eleven books, inferior to Swift's work in personal satire and raciness of humour, but strongly resembling the Battle of the Books in the plan and management of the literary warfare. About the same time, Swift appears to have revised and completed his Tale of a Tub, one of his most remarkable productions. The preliminary advertisements of the bookseller in 1704, mention, that both these treatises appear to have been arranged for publication in 1697, the last year of Sir William Temple's life; there is, therefore, reason to believe that his death prevented their being then given to the world.

During this period, Swift's muse did not remain entirely idle. The following nervous verses on the burning of Whitehall, occur in his hand-writing, and with his corrections, among the papers of Mr. Lyons. It is remarkable, that while the first couplet breathes that zeal for the property of the church, which afterwards

Digitized by Google

dictated so many of Swift's publications, the tenor of the whole is completely in unison with revolution principles, and perhaps they are more violently expressed respecting the execution of Charles the First, than would have received the applause of many determined Whigs. The rough satirical force of the lines somewhat resembles the poetry of Churchill.

ON THE BURNING OF WHITEHALL, IN 1697.*

THIS pile was raised by Wolsey's impious hands,
Built with the church's patrimonial lands.
Here bloody Henry kept his cruel court,
Hence sprung the martyrdoms of every sort.
Weak Edward here, and Mary the bigot,
Did both their holy innovations plot.
A fiercer Tudor fill'd the churchman's seat,
In all her father's attributes complete.
Dudley's lewd life doth the white mansion stain,
And a slain guest obscures a glorious reign.†
Then Northern James dishonour'd every room
With filth and palliardisme brought from home.‡
Next the French consort dignified the stews,
Employing males to their first proper use.
A bold usurper next did domineer,
Whirl'd hence by th' angry demons of the air.
When saunt'ring Charles returned, a fulsome crew
Of parasites, buffoons, he with him drew.
Nay, worse than these fill the polluted hall,
Bawds, pimps, and panders, the detested squawl
Of riots, fancied rapes, the devil and all.§
This pious prince here too did breathe his last,
His certain death on different persons cast.
His wise successor brought a motley throng,
Despising right, strongly protecting wrong
To these assistant herds of preaching cowls,
And troops of noisy, senseless, fighting fools.
Guerdon for this: he heard the dread command,
"Embark, and leave your crown and native land."

* Such is the date upon the manuscript. But Whitehall was burned in April 1690-1; the date therefore must be that of the year in which the verses were composed, not that in which the accident took place.

† Beheading of Queen Mary.

‡ After this a line scratched out,

And here did under the black plaister groan.

§ Originally thus

Of spurious brats, abhorr'd by all.

Digitized by Google

He gone, the rank infection still remains,
Which to repel requires eternal pains,
No force to cleanse it can a river draw,
Nor Hercules could do't, nor great Nassau.
Most greedy financiers, and lavish too,
Swarm in, in spite of all that prince could do;
Projectors, peculats, the palace hold,
Patriots exchanging liberty for gold,
Monsters unknown to this blest land of old.
Heaven takes the cure in hand, celestial ire
Applies the oft-tried remedy of fire;
The purging flames were better far employ'd,
Than when old Sodom was, or Troynovant destroy'd.
The nest obscene of every pamper'd vice,
Sinks down of this infernal paradise,
Down come the lofty roofs, the cedar burns,
The blended metal to a torrent turns.
The carvings crackle and the marbles rive,
The paintings shrink, vainly the Henries strive,
Propt by great Holbein's pencil, down they fall,
The fiery deluge sweeps and swallows all.
But mark how Providence with watchful care,*
Did Inigo's famed building spare,
That theatre produced an action truly great,
On which eternal acclamations wait;
Of kings deposed, most faithful annals tell,
And slaughter'd monarchs would a volume swell.
Our happy chronicle can show alone
——————————— tyrants executed *one*.†

Another copy of verses, written about the same period "in a lady's ivory table-book,"‡ are curious, as the first specimen of that peculiar talent which Swift possessed, of ridiculing the vain, frivolous, and common-place topics of general society.

Meantime, amid the ease of a literary life, and with the prospects which Temple's confirmed friendship appeared to open to him, Swift was imperceptibly laying the foundation for a train of misery, which was to em-

* The Banqueting-house, built upon a plan by the celebrated Inigo Jones, alone escaped the conflagration. It is unnecessary to add, that in front of this structure Charles I. was beheaded.

† The last line originally ran

On this day tyrants executed one;

But the first three words are blotted out, and the word "memorandum" written below them.

‡ Swift's Works, Vol. XIV. p. 52.

Digitized by Google

bitter his future years; for it was during his second residence at Moorpark, that he formed his acquaintance with Esther Johnson, better known by the poetical name of Stella. And before entering upon this ominous part of his history, it is necessary to notice some previous circumstances, which have been reserved to this place.

While Swift pursued his studies at Trinity College as a secluded and indigent scholar, his intercourse with female society was probably much limited. On his return to Leicestershire, his mother appears to have had some apprehensions of his forming an imprudent attachment to a young woman of their neighbourhood,* fears which Swift himself treats as visionary, in a letter to a friend.† As that letter forms a sort of index to the views with which he frequented female society, and to his plans of settling in life, the reader will excuse an extract. He alludes to his "cold temper, and unconfined humour," as sufficient hinderances to any imprudent attachment. He mentions his resolutions not to think of marriage until his fortune was settled in the world, and hints, that, even then, he would be so hard to please, he might probably put it off till doomsday.‡ But he charges these appearances of at-

* See a Letter to Dr. Worrall, 16th January 1728-9.—"When I went a lad to my mother, after the Revolution, she brought me acquainted with a family, where there was a daughter, with whom I was acquainted. My prudent mother was afraid I should be in love with her: but when I went to London she married an innkeeper in Loughborough, in that county, by whom she had several children."—Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. p. 220. The name of this fair seducer was Betty Jones, who, by her marriage above mentioned, became Mrs. Perkins of the George Inn. Her daughter afterwards claimed Swift's protection, and was befriended by him.

† Letter to the Reverend John Kendall, dated 11th February 1691-2, Swift's Works, Vol. XV. p. 251.

‡ A singular anecdote is told, which seems to show, that, at a late period of life, he retained his sentiments concerning early marriages. "A young clergyman, the son of a bishop in Ireland, having married without the knowledge of his friends, it gave umbrage to his family, and his father refused to see him. The Dean being in company with him some time after, said he would tell him a story: 'When I was a schoolboy at Kilkenny, and in the lower form, I longed very much to have a horse of my own to ride on.

Digitized by Google

tachment, which his friend had deemed symptoms of passion, to an active and restless temper, incapable of enduring idleness, and, therefore, catching at such opportunities of amusement as most readily occurred, and frequently seeking and finding it in the sort of insignificant gallantry, which he had used towards the girl in question; a habit, he adds, to be laid aside, whenever he began to take sober resolutions, and which, should he enter the church, he would not find it hard to lay down in the porch. Swift proved unable to keep the promise which, doubtless, he had made to himself, as well as to his friend; and it is probably to a habit, at first indulged merely from vanity, or for the sake of amusement, that we are to trace the well-known circumstances which embittered his life, and impaired his reputation.

His next attachment assumed a more serious complexion. It was contracted in Ireland, and the object was Jane Waryng, the sister of his ancient college companion, whom by a cold poetical conceit he has termed Varina. From the letter* which he wrote to that lady, 29th April 1696, his passion appears to have been deep and serious, with too much of the tragic mood to accord exactly with his account of those petty intrigues, in which

One day I saw a poor man leading a very mangy lean horse out of the town to kill him for the skin. I asked the man if he would sell him, which he readily consented to, upon my offering him somewhat more than the price of the hide, which was all the money I had in the world. I immediately got on him, to the great envy of some of my schoolfellows, and to the ridicule of others, and rode him about the town. The horse soon tired and laid down. As I had no stable to put him into, nor any money to pay for his sustenance, I began to find out what a foolish bargain I had made, and cried heartily for the loss of my cash; but the horse dying soon after upon the spot, gave me some relief.' To this the young clergyman answered, 'Sir, your story is very good, and applicable to my case; I own I deserve such a rebuke;' and then burst into a flood of tears. The Dean made no reply, but went the next day to the lord-lieutenant, and prevailed on him to give the young gentleman a small living, then vacant, for his immediate support: and not long after brought about a reconciliation between his father and him."

* Swift's Works, Vol. XV. p. 262.

Digitized by Google

Cadenus, common forms apart,
In every scene had kept his heart;
Had sigh'd and languish'd, vow'd and writ,
For pastime, or to show his wit.

On the contrary, the letter to Varina proposes, in the most pressing terms, matrimony as a "just and honourable action, which would furnish health to her, and unspeakable happiness to both." It is a pleading of vehemence and exclamation, containing a solemn offer to forego every prospect of interest for the sake of Varina; and a pathetic complaint, that her love was more fatal than her cruelty. Another letter, which we find addressed to the same lady, is addressed to Miss Jane Waryng (no longer Varina) and is written in a very different tone from the first. Four years had now elapsed, an interval in which much may have happened to abate the original warmth of Swift's passion; nor is it perhaps very fair, ignorant as we are of what had occurred in the interim, to pass a severe sentence upon his conduct, when, after being mortified by Varina's cruelty during so long a period, he seems to have been a little startled by her sudden offer of capitulation. It is, however, certain, that, just when the lover, worn out by neglect, or disgusted by uncertainty, began to grow cool in his suit, the lady, a case not altogether without example, became pressing and categorical in her enquiries what had altered the style of her admirer's letters. In reply, Swift charges Varina with want of affection, and indifference, states his own income in a most dismal point of view, yet intimates he might well pretend to a better fortune than she was possessed of. He is so far from retaining his former opinion as to the effects of a happy union, that he enquires whether the physicians had got over some scruples they appeared to entertain on the subject of her health. Lastly, he demands peremptorily to know whether she could undertake to manage their domestic affairs, with an income of rather less than three hundred pounds a-year; whether she would engage to follow the methods he should point out for the improvement of her mind; whether she could bend all her affections to the same

Digitized by Google

direction which he should give his own, and so govern her passions, however justly provoked, as at all times to resume her good humour at his approach; and, finally, whether she could account the place where he resided, more welcome than courts and cities without him? These premises agreed, (as indispensable to please those, who, like himself, were "deeply read in the world,") he intimates his willingness to wed her, though *without* personal beauty or large fortune. It must remain uncertain whether the positive requisites, or the proffered abatements, were least acceptable to the lady; but, under all circumstances, she must have been totally divested of pride and delicacy, if she could, upon such terms, have exacted from her reluctant lover, the faith which he seemed so unwilling to plight. Thus separated Swift and Varina. Much, as we have already noticed, may no doubt have happened, in the course of their correspondence, to alter his opinion of that lady, or lead him to imagine that, in delaying a positive answer to his proposals, she was trifling with his passion. But ere she was dismissed from the scene, he had learned to know one with whom much of the good and evil of his future life was to be inseparably blended.

Esther Johnson, who purchased, by a life of prolonged hopes and disappointed affection, a poetical immortality under the name of Stella, became first known to Swift during his second residence with Sir William Temple. The birth of Stella has been carefully investigated, with the hopes of discovering something that might render a mysterious and romantic history yet more romantic. But there are no sound reasons for supposing that she had other parents than her reputed father and mother, the former the younger brother of a good family in Nottinghamshire, and by profession a merchant in London,—the latter a woman of acute and penetrating talents, the friend and companion of Lady Gifford, Temple's favourite sister, and cherished by her with particular respect and regard until the end of her life. Johnson, the father, died soon after Stella's birth, but Mrs. Johnson and her two daughters were inmates of Moorpark for several years. General interest was

Digitized by Google

taken by all the inhabitants of this mansion, in the progress which little Hetty made in her education. And much of the task of instruction devolved upon Swift, now a man of thirty, who seems to have, for some time, regarded his lovely pupil with the friendship of an elder brother.* But the constant and habitual intercourse of affectionate confidence between the master and the pupil, by degrees assumed a more tender complexion; and it will be presently seen, that when fortune appeared disposed to separate them, they were both unwilling to submit to her dictates. There is little doubt, that the feelings which attended this new connexion, must have had weight in disposing Swift to break off the lingering and cold courtship which he had maintained with Mrs. Jane Waryng. And from this period, the fates of Swift and Stella were so implicated together, as to produce the most remarkable incidents of both their lives.

Four years of quiet and happy residence at Moorpark were terminated by the death of Sir William Temple, in 1698–9. He was not unmindful of Swift's generous and disinterested friendship, which he rewarded by a pecuniary legacy, and with what he, doubtless, regarded as of much greater consequence, the bequest of his literary remains. These, considering the author's

* He taught her even the most ordinary parts of education, and, in particular, instructed her in the art of writing. Their hands resemble each other in some peculiarities. But though he instructed her in the necessary branches of education, there is evidence he went no further, and that Stella, far from being a learned lady, was really deficient in many of the most ordinary points of information. The editor is possessed of an exact transcript of marginal notes, written by Swift for elucidation of an edition of Milton, 1669, which is inscribed, "The gift of Dr. Jonathan Swift to Mrs. Dingley and Mrs. Johnson, May 1703." The notes are numerous, but the information which they convey is such as could only be useful to persons of a very indifferent education. Thus, Palestine is explained to be the Holy-Land, Rhene and Danau, two German rivers, Pilasters are rendered pillars, Alcides, Hercules; Columbus is designated as he "who discovered America," and Xerxes as having "made a bridge with ships over the Hellespont." It does not seem likely that Swift would have taken all this trouble merely for the illumination of Mrs. Dingley, and the inference plainly must be, that Stella was neither well informed nor well educated.

Digitized by Google

high reputation and numerous friends, held forth to his literary executor an opportunity of coming before the public, in a manner that should excite at once interest and respect. And when it is considered, that all Swift's plans revolved upon making himself eminent as an author, the value of such an occasion to distinguish himself could scarcely be too highly estimated.

The experiment, however, appeared at first to have in a great measure disappointed these reasonable expectations. The works of Temple were carefully edited, with a dedication to King William; and at the same time a petition was presented for Swift, reminding his Majesty of a promise made to Sir William Temple, to bestow on him a prebend of Canterbury or Westminster. Swift has expressed his belief, that the Earl of Romney, who promised to second this petition, did in reality suppress it; and William, when he ceased to reap the benefit of Temple's political experience, was not likely to interest himself deeply in his posthumous literary labours. After long attendance upon court, therefore, Swift's hopes of promotion disappeared, and the revolution principles, which he certainly strongly professed, did not prevent his regarding King William, and his memory, with very little complacence.

SECTION II.

Swift goes to Ireland with Lord Berkeley—His differences with that nobleman—Obtains the living of Laracor—He is displeased with his sister's marriage—His mode of life at Laracor—Mrs. Dingley and Stella come to Ireland—Tisdal makes proposals of marriage to Stella—Swift embarks in politics—His opinion of the affairs of church and state—Tale of a Tub.

Swift, now in the prime of life, and well known both to the great and learned, could not long want an honour-

Digitized by Google

able provision, and accordingly received and accepted an invitation to attend the Earl of Berkeley, one of the Lords Justices of Ireland, to that country, in the capacity of chaplain and private secretary. But these plurality of offices gave umbrage to a Mr. Bushe, who had pitched upon the latter situation for himself, and who contrived, under pretence of its incompatibility with the character of a clergyman, to have Swift superseded in his own favour. Lord Berkeley, "with a poor apology," promised to make his chaplain amends, by giving him the first good church-living that should become vacant. But neither in this did he keep his word; for, when the rich Deanery of Derry was in his gift, Bushe entered into a negotiation to sell it for a bribe of a thousand pounds, and would only consent to give Swift the preference, upon his paying a like sum. Incensed alike at the secretary and his principal, whom he supposed to be accessary to this unworthy conduct, Swift returned the succinct answer, "God confound you both for a couple of scoundrels," and instantly left Lord Berkeley's lodgings in the castle.* He had already given vent to his resentment in one or two keen personal satires; and his patron, alarmed for the consequences of an absolute breach with a man of his temper and talents, was glad to reconcile, or at least

* Lord Orrery intimates, that, notwithstanding what is above stated, Swift would actually have obtained this preferment, but for the interference of the learned Dr. King. "The rich Deanery of Derry became vacant at this time, and was intended for him by Lord Berkeley, if Dr. King, then Bishop of Derry, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin, had not interposed; entreating that the deanery might be given to some grave and elderly divine, rather than to so young a man; because, added the bishop, the situation of Derry is in the midst of Presbyterians, and I should be glad of a clergyman who could be of assistance to me. I have no objection to Mr. Swift. I know him to be a sprightly, ingenious young man; but, instead of residing, I dare say he will be eternally flying backwards and forwards to London; and therefore I entreat that he may be provided for in some other place." *Lord Orrery's Life of Swift*, London, 1752, p. 22. Archbishop King was afterwards himself disappointed of preferment on account of his age. When Dr. Boulter was preferred to be Primate of Ireland, in spite of his claims, as Archbishop of Dublin, King received him seated in his chair, with the sarcastic apology, "My lord, I am certain your grace will forgive me, because you know I am *too old* to rise."

Digitized by Google

to pacify him, by presenting him with the rectory of Agher, and the vicarages of Laracor and Rathbeggan. These livings united, though far inferior in value to the Deanery of Derry, formed yet a certain and competent fund of subsistence, amounting to about L.230 yearly. The Prebend of Dunlavin being added in the year 1700, raised Swift's income to betwixt L.350 and L.400, which was its amount until he was preferred to the Deanery of St. Patrick's. These facts are ascertained from his account-books for the years 1701 and 1702, which evince, on the one hand, the remarkable economy with which Swift managed this moderate income, and on the other, that, of the expenses which he permitted himself, more than one-tenth part was incurred in acts of liberality and benevolence.*

Swift's quarrel with Lord Berkeley did not disturb his intercourse with the rest of the family, in which he retained his situation of chaplain. Lady Berkeley stood high in his opinion as an amiable and virtuous woman, in whom the most easy and polite conversation, joined with the truest piety, might be observed united to as much advantage as ever they were seen apart in any other persons.† The company also, of two amiable and

* Account of expenses from Nov. 1, 1700, to Nov. 1, 1701.

Articles per Account,	L.	s.	d.
Shoes and boots,	3	0	0
A servant's wages, &c.	7	0	0
Washing, &c.	4	0	0
Linen,	5	0	0
Clothes,	13	0	0
Journeys,	10	0	0
J. B.	5	0	0
Accidents,	5	0	0
Horse,	12	0	0
Letters,	1	10	0
Play,	5	0	0
Gifts and charity extraordinary,	10	0	0
Charity common,	2	10	0
Expenses common,	17	0	0
	L.100	0	0

† This excellent lady was daughter of Baptist Noel, Viscount Campden, and sister to Edward, first Earl of Gainsborough. She died 30th July 1719.

Digitized by Google

lively young ladies of fashion, daughters of the Earl,* must have rendered the society still more fascinating; and, accordingly, it is during his residence with Lord Berkeley, that Swift appears first to have given way to the playfulness of his disposition in numerous poetical *jeux d'esprit*, which no poet ever composed with the same felicity and spirit. Of this class are the inimitable petition of Mrs. Frances Harris, the verses on Miss Floyd, a young lady of beauty and spirit, who was also an inmate of the family, and some other pieces, written during this period. But the most solemn waggery was the Meditation on a Broomstick, composed and read with infinite gravity, as an existing portion of the Honourable Mr. Boyle's Meditations, which, it seems, Lady Berkeley used to request Swift to read aloud more frequently than was agreeable to him. In such company, and with such amusements, his time glided happily away, and he retained a high regard for the ladies of the family during the rest of his life. Lady Betty Berkeley, in particular, afterwards Lady Betty Germaine, was, to the end of his career, one of his most valuable and most valued correspondents.

During this period of Swift's life, his sister contracted an imprudent marriage with a person called Fenton, to his very high and avowed displeasure, which, Lord Orrery has informed us, was solely owing to his ambition being outraged at her matching with a tradesman. This, however, was by no means the case. Fenton was a worthless character, and upon the eve of bankruptcy, when Swift's sister, against his warm remonstrances, chose to unite her fate to his. And although he retained his resentment against her imprudence, Lord Orrery ought not to have omitted, that, out of his own moderate income, Swift allowed Mrs. Fenton what was adequate to

* Ladies Mary and Elizabeth Berkeley. The former married Thomas Chambers of Hanworth, in the county of Middlesex; the latter Sir John Germaine of Drayton, in the county of Northampton. A third daughter of the Earl, Lady Penelope, died during his residence at Dublin.

Digitized by Google

her comfortable support, amid the ruin in which that imprudence had involved her.*

Having now taken leave of Lord Berkeley's family, at least as resident chaplain, Swift, in the year 1700, took possession of his living at Laracor, and resumed the habits of a country clergyman. He is said to have walked down, *incognito*, to the place of his future residence; and tradition has recorded various anecdotes†

* These particulars concerning Fenton are on the authority of Mr. Theophilus Swift.

† Among these may be reckoned the doggerel lines, in which he is said to have commemorated various towns and villages through which he passed in his way to Laracor.

> Dublin for a city, Dunshaghlin for a plow,
> Navan for a market, Ardbracken for a cow;
> Kells for an old town, Virginia poor,
> Cavan for dirt, and Belturbet for a whore.
>
> SWIFTIANA.

Swift was very much addicted to this sort of proverb-making, as it may be called. In the following couplet on Carlow, I understand the first line is highly descriptive; but that the town and inhabitants do not now merit the reproach contained in the second:

> High church and low steeple,
> Dirty town and proud people.

Many instances of this humour may be observed in the Journal to Stella.

Another anecdote of this journey is preserved by Mr. Wilson; "There were three inns in Navan, each of which claim, to this day, the honour of having entertained Dr. Swift. It is probable that he dined at one of them, for it is certain that he slept at Kells, in the house of Jonathan Belcher, a Leicestershire man, who had built the inn of that town on the English model, which still exists; and, in point of capaciousness and convenience, would not disgrace the first road in England. The host, whether struck by the commanding sternness of Swift's appearance, or from natural civility, showed him into the best room, and waited himself at table. The attention of Belcher seems so far to have won upon Swift as to have produced some conversation. 'You're an Englishman, sir?' said Swift. 'Yes, sir.' 'What is your name?' 'Jonathan Belcher, sir.' 'An Englishman, and *Jonathan* too, in the town of Kells,—Who would have thought it! What brought you to this country?' 'I came with Sir Thomas Taylor, sir; and I believe I could reckon *fifty Jonathans* in my family.' 'Then you are a man of family?' 'Yes, sir; and I have four sons and three daughters by one mother, a good woman of true Irish mould.' 'Have you long been out of your native country?' 'Thirty years, sir.' 'Do you ever expect to

Digitized by Google

ney. He walked straight to the curate's anded his name, and announced himself ——ity 'as his master.' All was bustle to receive a person of such consequence, and who, apparently, was determined to make his importance felt.* The curate's wife was ordered to lay aside the doctor's only clean shirt and stockings, which he carried in his pocket; nor did Swift relax his airs of domination until he had excited much alarm, which his subsequent kind and friendly conduct to the worthy couple, turned into respectful attachment. This was the ruling trait of Swift's conduct to others; his praise assumed the appearance and language of complaint; his benefits were often prefaced by a prologue of a threatening nature; his most grave themes were blended with ironical pleasantry, and, in those of a lighter nature, deep and bitter satire is often couched under the most trifling levity.

Swift's life at Laracor was regular and clerical. He read prayers twice a-week, and regularly preached

visit it again?' 'Never.' 'Can you say that without a sigh?' 'I can, sir; my family is my country.' 'Why, sir, you are a better philosopher than those who have written volumes on the subject: Then you are reconciled to your fate?' 'I ought to be so; I am very happy; I like the people, and though I was not born in Ireland, I'll die in it, and that's the same thing.' Swift paused in deep thought for a minute, and then, with much energy, repeated the first line of the preamble of the noted Irish statute—*Ipsis Hibernis Hiberniores!* ('The English settlers are more Irish than the Irish themselves.')"—*Swiftiana*, London, 1804, Vol. I. 58.

* His mode of introducing himself was often whimsical and alarming. The widow of Mr. Watson, a miniature-painter in Dublin, who, herself, followed the same profession, used to mention, that, while a girl in her father's house, (a Mr. Hoy, of the county of Wicklow,) a gentleman rode up to the door, was admitted to the parlour where the family were sitting, and held some conversation with Mr. Hoy, probably upon a literary topic, as her father left the room to seek a book referred to. During his absence, the stranger, stealing softly behind her, gave her a smart and unexpected slap on the cheek, saying, at the same time, to the astonished girl, "You will now remember Dean Swift as long as you live;" in which he prophesied very truly. Even in hiring servants, it was his custom to begin by asking them their qualifications for discharging the lowest and most mortifying offices. If they answered saucily, or expressed themselves affronted, the treaty was ended; if not, he set their submissive replies to the account of their good sense, and usually engaged them.

Digitized by Google

upon the Sunday. Upon the former occasions the church was thinly attended; and it is said, that the ludicrous and irreverend anecdote of his addressing the church service to his parish clerk, occurred when he found the rest of the congregation absent upon such an occasion. The truth of the story has been, however, disputed, although the friends of Swift allow that it had much of the peculiarity of his vein of humour. The reader will find beneath, the reasoning of Mr. Theophilus Swift upon this curious anecdote, to which there can be but one objection, that Swift, namely, was more likely to do such a thing, than Orrery to invent it; and that to Swift, notwithstanding his sincere piety, a jest was irresistibly seductive.* On Sundays the church at Laracor was well attended by the neighbouring families; and Swift, far from having reason to complain of want of an audience, attained that reputation which he pronounced to be the height of his ambition, since enquiries were frequently made at his faithful clerk, Roger Coxe,† whether the Doctor was to preach that Sunday.

While resident at Laracor, it was Swift's principal care to repair the dilapidations which the church and vicarage had sustained, by the carelessness or avarice of

* "I perfectly recollect, that neither my father or Mrs. Whiteway had ever heard the story of 'Dearly beloved Roger,' till Orrery's book made its appearance. I have frequently heard them say so. They allowed it was possible, and not unlike the Dean; but they believed it was an invention of Orrery's, to discredit the Dean's respect for religion. They thought it very singular that such a circumstance, had it been true, should not have been known to them; especially as my father had a considerable estate near Laracor, and resided very much upon it. For myself, I give no credit to the story. I verily believe that Orrery applied a story he had found, to discredit the piety of the Dean." Mr. Swift afterwards found the same story, in the same words, in an old jest-book, printed betwixt 1655 and 1660.

† Roger was a man of humour, and merited a master like Swift. When the Doctor remarked that he wore a scarlet waistcoat, he defended himself as being of the church-militant. "Will you not bid for these poultry?" said Swift to his humble dependant, at a sale of farm-stock. "No, sir;" said Roger, "they're just a-going to *Hatch*." They were, in fact, on the point of being knocked down to a farmer called Hatch. This humourist was originally a hatter, and died at the age of 90, at Bruky, in the county of Cavan. See *Swiftiana*, Vol. I. p. 9.

Digitized by Google

former incumbents. He expressed the utmost indignation at the appearance of the church; and, during the first year of his incumbency, expended a considerable sum in putting it into decent repair. The vicarage he also made comfortably tenantable,* and proceeded to improve it, according to the ideas of beauty and taste which were at that time universally received. He formed a pleasant garden; smoothed the banks of a rivulet into a canal, and planted willows in regular ranks by its side. These willows, so often celebrated in the Journal to Stella, are now decayed or cut down; the garden cannot be traced; and the canal only resembles a ditch. Yet the parish and the rector continue to derive some advantage, from its having been once the abode of Swift. He increased the glebe from one acre to twenty. The tithes of Effernock, purchased with his own money, at a time when it did not abound, were, by his will, settled for ever on the incumbent of that living.†

But Laracor had yet greater charms than its willows and canals, the facetious humours of Roger Coxe, and the applause of the gentry of the neighbourhood. Swift had no sooner found his fortune established in Ireland, than it became his wish that Stella should be an inhabitant of that kingdom. This was easily arranged. She was her own mistress, and the rate of interest being higher in Ireland, furnished her with a plausible excuse for taking up her residence near the friend and instructer of her youth. The company of Mrs. Dingley, a woman of narrow income and limited understanding,

* The house appears, from its present ruins, to have been a comfortable mansion. The present Bishop of Meath, (whom the editor is proud to call his friend,) with classic feeling, while pressing upon his clergy, at a late visitation, the duty of repairing the glebe-houses, addressed himself particularly to the Vicar of Laracor, and recommended to him, in the necessary improvements of his mansion, to save as far as possible, the walls of the house which had been inhabited by his great predecessor.

† This was not without a touch of his peculiar humour. These tithes, by his will, are devised to his successors in the cure, so long as the Established Church lasted; and to the poor, in case it should be exchanged for any other form of the Christian religion, always excepting from the benefit thereof, Jews, Atheists, and Infidels.

Digitized by Google

but of middle age, and a creditable character, obviated, in a great measure, the inferences which the world must otherwise have necessarily drawn from this step. Some whispers so singular a resolution doubtless occasioned; but the caution of Swift, who was never known to see Stella but in presence of a third party, and the constant attendance of Mrs. Dingley, to whom, apparently, he paid equal attention, seem to have put scandal to silence. Their residence was varied with the same anxious regard to Stella's character. When Swift left his parsonage at Laracor, the ladies became its tenants; and when he returned, they regularly retired to their lodgings in the town of Trim, the capital of the diocese, or were received by Dr. Raymond, so often mentioned in the Journal, the hospitable vicar of that parish. Every exterior circumstance which could distinguish an union of mere friendship from one of a more tender nature, was carefully observed, and the surprise at first excited by the settlement of Mrs. Dingley and Stella in a country to which they were strangers, seems gradually to have subsided.* It is, however, highly probable, that between Swift and Stella there was a tacit understanding that their union was to be completed by marriage, when Swift's income, according to the prudential scheme which he had unhappily adopted, should be adequate to the expense of a matrimonial establishment. And here it is impossible to avoid remarking the vanity of that over-prudence, which labours to provide against all possible contingencies. Had Swift, like any ordinary man in his situation, been contented to share his limited income with a deserving object of his affections, the task of his biographers would have been short and cheerful; and we should neither have had to record, nor apologise for, those

* The English acquaintances of the parties expected a different result. Mr. Thomas Swift, the Dean's "Parson-Cousin," in a letter from Puttenham, Feb. 5, 1706, asks "whether Jonathan be married? or whether he has been able to resist the charms of both these gentlewomen that marched quite from Moorpark to Dublin, (as they would have marched to the North or anywhere else,) with full resolution to engage him?"

Digitized by Google

circumstances which form the most plausible charge against his memory. In the pride of talent and of wisdom, he endeavoured to frame a new path to happiness; and the consequences have rendered him a warning, where the various virtues with which he was endowed, ought to have made him a pattern.

Meanwhile, the risk of ill construction being so carefully guarded against, Stella with her beauty and accomplishments was not long without an admirer. She was then about eighteen, her hair of a raven black, her features both beautiful and expressive, and her form of perfect symmetry, though rather inclined to embonpoint. To those outward graces were added good sense, great docility, and uncommon powers both of grave and gay conversation, and a fortune, which, though small, was independent. It is not surprising, therefore, that she should have received an offer of marriage from the Reverend Dr. William Tisdal, a clergyman of talents and respectability, with whom Swift lived upon a familiar and friendly footing. The proposals of the lover were made to Swift, as the lady's guardian, by whose wishes and advice she was determined to be guided; and thus he was apparently reduced either to the necessity of stating his own pretensions to Stella's hand, or of resigning her to a rival. Mr. Deane Swift has here frankly explained and condemned the conduct of his kinsman, which Mr. Sheridan, perhaps for that very reason, has laboured to colour over and justify. According to the former, Swift insisted upon such unreasonable terms for Stella's maintenance and provision, in case of widowhood, that Tisdal was unable to accede to them. Sheridan, on the other hand, assures us, that the refusal came finally from the young lady herself, who, though she showed at first no repugnance to Tisdal's proposal, perhaps with a view to sound Swift's sentiments, yet could not at length prevail upon herself to abandon the hope of being united to him. Tisdal himself suspected Swift did not warmly befriend his suit, as is evident from a letter, dated 20th April 1704,* in which the latter endeavours, somewhat imperfectly,

* Swift's Works, Vol. XV. p. 287.

Digitized by Google

to justify himself from such an accusation. For considering his express admission, that if his fortune and humour permitted him to think of matrimony, among all persons on earth Stella should be his choice; and considering the close and intimate union which had so long subsisted between them, it requires strong faith to add implicit credit to Swift's next assertion, that so strong a predilection never operated as an impediment to Tisdal's courtship. Nor is it in nature to suppose that he should have been indifferent to the thoughts of one "whom he loved better than his life, a thousand million of times,"* passing into the possession of another. It is also remarkable, that when Tisdal is mentioned in the Journal to Stella, it is always with a slight or sneer, and frequently with allusion to some disgusting imperfection. Yet no open breach took place between the rivals, if we may term them so, for they continued to maintain occasional intercourse down to the year 1740, when Tisdal witnesses the Dean's last will. The coarse epigram attached to the following fragment of one of Swift's letters, (never before published,) shows that their correspondence was not uniformly of the most friendly nature.

Dear Sir,—You desired me to finish some lines you wrote at Dunshaglin:

How can I finish what you have begun?
Can fire to ripen fruit assist the sun?
Should Raphael draw a virgin's blooming face,
Exert his skill to give it every grace,
And leave the rest to some Dutch heavy drone;
Would you not rather see that face alone?
Or should Praxiteles the marble take,
A Venus' head and neck and shoulders make,
And some rude hand attempt the rest from thence,
Would you not think him void of common sense?
These hints I hope will move you to excuse
The first refusal of my humble muse.
The task I must decline, and think it just
Your piece continue as it is, a Bust.
Since want . . . . . show,
A golden charm . . . . below.
. . . . . .
. . . . . .

* This and similar expressions occur in the Journal.

Digitized by Google

[Four lines in the original are here erased, and the words here interlined, only could be made out.]

Being in a vein of writing epigrams, I send you the following piece upon Tisdal, which I intend to send to all his acquaintance; for he goes from house to house to show his wit upon me, for which I think it reasonable he should have something to stare him in the face.

UPON WILLIAM TISDAL, D. D.

When a Roman was dying, the next man of kin
Stood over him gaping to take his breath in.
Were Tisdal the same way to blow out his breath,
Such a whiff to the living were much worse than death.
Any man with a nose would much rather die,
So would Jack, so would Dan, so would you, so would I.
Without a reproach to the Doctor, I think
Whenever he dies, he must die with a stink.*—(T.)

From the time that she finally rejected Tisdal's addresses, Stella appears to have considered her destiny as united to that of Swift. She encouraged no other admirer, and never left Ireland, excepting for a visit of five or six months to England, in 1705.

But love or friendship, with its pleasures and embarrassments, were insufficient to occupy Swift's active mind and aspiring disposition. As the eleve of Sir William Temple, he had been carefully instructed in the principles of the English constitution; as a clergyman of the church of England, he was zealous for the maintenance of her rights and her power. These were the leading principles which governed him through life; nor will it be difficult to show, that he uniformly acted up to them, unless in addressing those who confound principle with party, and deem that consistence can only be claimed by such as, with blindfold and indiscriminating attachment, follow the banners and leaders of a particular denomination of politicians. Swift, on the contrary, as he carried into the ranks of the Whigs the opinions and scruples of a high-church clergyman, joined, in like manner, the standard of Harley with

* The original fragment is preserved in the Museum of the Dublin Society, Hawkins Street, Dublin. It may have been addressed to Mr. Ludlow, whose family seat of Ardsallagh is not far from Dunshaglin.

Digitized by Google

those sentiments of liberty, and that hatred of arbitrary power, which became the pupil of Sir William Temple. Such a distinction between opinions in church and state has not frequently existed, the high-churchmen being usually Tories, and the low-church divines universally Whigs. But in Swift's mind the distinction did exist, and however it might embarrass his political conduct, nothing can be more certain than that he early drew the line, and constantly adhered to it. Even while residing with Sir William Temple, he judged the constancy of Archbishop Sancroft, who refused the oaths to William and Mary, worthy to be celebrated in an ode; while, at the same time, as far as can be safely argued from the Pindaric obscurity of the following stanzas, the poet gave his full approbation to the measure which placed those princes on the throne, so far as it was only a revolution of state:*

* The following severe lines on Dr. Sherlock's original refusal to take the oaths, and subsequent compliance with the revolution government, have much of Swift's spirit, and occur in the collection from which so many of his unpublished poems have been retrieved:

From the Lanesborough Manuscript, Trinity College, Dublin, "Whimsical Medley," Vol. I. Appendix, pages 52, 238.

TO DR. SHERLOCK, ON HIS NOT TAKING THE OATHS.

Since at the tavern I can't meet you,
With paper embassy I greet you,
T' advise you not yourself t' expose
By a refusal of the oaths;
In spite of fellowship and pupils,
To weigh your conscience out in scruples.
If, as you Queen's-men must believe,
Two nays make one affirmative;
Why, in the name of the predicaments,
And all your analytic sense,
Will you deny poor affirmations
In their turns, too, to make negations?
This postulatum any pate
Will grant, that's not prejudicate.
Nay, th' argument, I can assure you,
Appears to some *a fortiori*,
Hoc dato et concesso, thus I
In Baralipton blunderbuss ye.
He who to two things takes an oath,
Is by the last absolved from both; For

"Necessity, thou tyrant conscience of the great,
Say, why the church is still led blindfold by the state;
Why should the first be ruin'd and laid waste
To mend dilapidations in the last?
And yet the world, whose eyes are on our mighty prince,
Thinks Heaven has cancelled all our sins,
And that his subjects share his happy influence;
Follow the model close, for so I'm sure they should,
But wicked kings draw more examples than the good."

With sentiments thus differing from the Whigs in church affairs, and in temporal matters from the Tories, Swift was now about to assume the character of a political author. The period was the year 1701, when Lords Somers, Oxford, Halifax, and Portland, were impeached by the House of Commons, on account of their share in the partition-treaty. Swift, who beheld the violence of these proceedings with real apprehension,

For each oath being an affirmation,
Both, as 'twas own'd, make a negation.
Thus scientifically you see
The more you're bound, the more you're free.
As jugglers when they knit one more
Undo the knot they tied before.
I admire that your Smiglesian under-
Standing, should make so great a blunder,
As roundly to aver *subjectio*
Wern't cousin-german to *protectio*:
Nay more, they're relatives, unless I
Mistake Tom Hobs's *secundum esse*.
I've hopes that you have slyly taken
The oaths elsewhere, to save your bacon.
So spark, by country clap half undone,
Takes coach and steals a cure at London.

In the "Anthologia Hibernica," for December 1794, Vol. IV. Mercier, Dublin, page 457, there occurs the following

EPIGRAM ON DR. SHERLOCK.

"Regibus obsequium dum binis obligat unum,
Jurat utroque unam, prodit utroque fidem.
Quid mirum? Si sit semper jurare paratus;
Cum per quos jurat tres habet ille Deos."

Translated.

"The same allegiance to two kings he pays,
Swears the same faith to both, and both betrays.
No wonder, if to swear he's always free,
That has two Gods to swear by more than we."

Digitized by Google

founded his remonstrance to the public upon the experience to be derived from the history of the civil discords in Athens and Rome, where the noblest citizens, and those who had best deserved of the republic, fell successive victims to popular odium, until liberty itself, after degenerating into license, was extinguished by tyranny. This discourse on the contests and dissensions between the nobles and commons in Athens and Rome,* excited much attention. It was ascribed for some time to Lord Somers, and afterwards to Bishop Burnet, who was compelled to disown it publicly, in order to avoid the resentment of the House of Commons. Swift, who was probably in London at the time of publication, had again returned to Ireland, and, in a dispute with the Bishop of Kilmore, who twice told him he was a *young man*, when he pretended to deny that Burnet had written the pamphlet, he was induced to mortify his antagonist by owning the publication. Upon his return to England, in 1702, there no longer remained the same prudential reasons for secrecy; and Swift, without hesitation, avowed himself the author of this popular tract, and became at once intimate with Somers and Halifax, and with the Earl of Sunderland, to whom he had been formerly known.

If we can trust Swift's own averment, he made, upon this occasion, a free and candid avowal of his principles, both in church and state, declaring himself in the former to be a high-church man, and in the latter a Whig: a declaration which both Lord Halifax and Somers called to mind years afterwards,† at the time of Lord Godolphin's removal from office.

* Swift's Works, Volume III. p. 201.

† The passage is remarkable, and deserves to be quoted at length. "It was then I began to trouble myself with the differences between the principles of Whig and Tory; having formerly employed myself in other, and I think much better speculations. I talked often upon this subject with Lord Somers; told him,—that having been long conversant with the Greek and Latin authors, and therefore a lover of liberty, I found myself much inclined to be what they call a Whig in politics; and that besides, I thought it impossible, upon any other principle, to defend or submit to the Revolution; but as to religion, I confessed myself to be a high-churchman, and that I could

Digitized by Google

Thus wore on what may be considered as the happiest term of Swift's life, which was passed in the society of Stella, and the retreat to his willows at Laracor, varied by frequent excursions to England,* and a ready reception into the society of the great and of the learned. It was then he formed that invaluable acquaintance with Addison, which party-spirit afterwards cooled, though it could not extinguish, with Steele, with Arbuthnot, and with the other wits of the age, who used to assemble at Button's coffee-house. Of the commencement of this intercourse, Sheridan has given a characteristic and whimsical account.† It

not conceive how any one, who wore the habit of a clergyman, could be otherwise: That I had observed very well with what insolence and haughtiness some lords of the high-church party treated not only their own chaplains, but all other clergymen whatsoever, and thought this was sufficiently recompensed by their professions of zeal to the church: That I had likewise observed, how the Whig lords took a direct contrary measure, treated the persons of particular clergymen with particular courtesy, but showed much contempt and ill-will for the order in general: That I knew it was necessary for their party, to make their bottom as wide as they could, by taking all denominations of Protestants to be members of their body: That I would not enter into the mutual reproaches made by the violent men on either side; but that the connivance or encouragement given by the Whigs to those writers of pamphlets who reflected upon the whole body of the clergy, without any exception, would unite the church to one man to oppose them, and that I doubted his lordship's friends did not consider the consequence of this."—Swift's Works, Vol. III. 187.

* From Swift's Journal these visits appear to have occurred at least once yearly.

† Though the greatness of Swift's talents was known to many in private life, and his company and conversation much sought after and admired, yet was his name hitherto little known in the republic of letters. The only pieces which he had then published, were "The Battle of the Books," and "The Contests and Dissensions in Athens and Rome," and both without a name. Nor was he personally known to any of the wits of the age, excepting Mr. Congreve, and one or two more, with whom he had contracted an acquaintance at Sir William Temple's. The knot of wits used at this time to assemble at Button's coffeehouse; and I had a singular account of Swift's first appearance there from Ambrose Philips, who was one of Mr. Addison's little senate. He said that they had for several successive days observed a strange clergyman come into the coffeehouse, who seemed utterly unacquainted with any of those who frequented it; and whose custom it was to lay his hat down

Digitized by Google

was cemented by the appearance of that celebrated work, The Tale of a Tub, which was first published in 1704.

This celebrated production is founded upon a simple and obvious allegory, conducted with all the humour of Rabelais, and without his extravagance.* The main

on a table, and walk backward and forward at a good pace for half an hour or an hour, without speaking to any mortal, or seeming in the least to attend to anything that was going forward there. He then used to take up his hat, pay his money at the bar, and walk away without opening his lips. After having observed this singular behaviour for some time, they concluded him to be out of his senses; and the name that he went by among them, was that of "the mad parson." This made them more than usually attentive to his motions; and one evening, as Mr. Addison and the rest were observing him, they saw him cast his eyes several times on a gentleman in boots, who seemed to be just come out of the country, and at last advanced toward him as intending to address him. They were all eager to hear what this dumb mad parson had to say, and immediately quitted their seats to get near him. Swift went up to the country gentleman, and in a very abrupt manner, without any previous salute, asked him, "Pray, sir, do you remember any good weather in the world?" The country gentleman, after staring a little at the singularity of his manner, and the oddity of the question, answered, "Yes, sir, I thank God, I remember a great deal of good weather in my time."—"That is more," said Swift, "than I can say; I never remember any weather that was not too hot, or too cold; too wet or too dry; but, however God Almighty contrives it, at the end of the year 'tis all very well." Upon saying this, he took up his hat, and without uttering a syllable more, or taking the least notice of any one, walked out of the coffeehouse; leaving all those who had been spectators of this odd scene staring after him, and still more confirmed in the opinion of his being mad.—*Sheridan's Life of Swift.*

There follows another anecdote, of which I am happy to give, upon the authority of Dr. Wall of Worcester, who had it from Dr. Arbuthnot himself, a less coarse edition than that which is generally told. Swift was seated by the fire; there was sand on the floor of the coffeehouse; and Arbuthnot, with a design to play upon this original figure, offered him a letter which he had been just addressing, saying, at the same time, "There—sand that:"—"I have got no sand," answered Swift, "but I can help you to a little *gravel.*" This he said so significantly, that Arbuthnot hastily snatched back his letter, to save it from the fate of the capital of Lilliput. Their acquaintance had not then, however, ripened into intimacy; for when Arbuthnot's name first occurs in the Journal to Stella, it is not rightly spelled, and he is mentioned as a stranger.

* Among the Dean's books, sold by auction 1745, was an edi-

Digitized by Google

purpose is to trace the gradual corruptions of the Church of Rome, and to exalt the English reformed church at the expense both of the Roman Catholic and Presbyterian establishments. It was written with a view to the interests of the High-church party, and it succeeded in rendering them the most important services; for what is so important to a party in Britain, whether in church or state, as to gain the laughers to their side. But the raillery was considered, not unreasonably, as too light for a subject of such grave importance; and it cannot be denied, that the luxuriance of Swift's wit has, in some parts of the Tale, carried him much beyond the bounds of propriety. Many of the graver clergy, even among the Tories, and particularly Dr. Sharpe, the Archbishop of York, were highly scandalized at the freedom of the satire; nor is there any doubt that the offence thus occasioned, proved the real bar to Swift's attaining the highest dignities in the church. King and Wotton, in their answers to the Tale, insisted largely upon the inconsistence between the bold and even profane turn of the satire, and the clerical character of the reputed author. For sim-

tion of Rabelais' works, with remarks and annotations in his own hand. This, could it be recovered, would be a work of no little interest, considering that the germ, both of the Tale and of Gulliver's Travels, may be traced in the works of the French Lucian. Swift was not, indeed, under the necessity of disguising his allegory with the buffoonery and mysticism affected by Rabelais; but the sudden and wide digressive excursions, the strain of extraordinary reading and uncouth learning which is assumed, together with the general style of the whole fable, are indisputably derived from the humorous philosopher of Chinon. A strange passage, which Quevedo has put into the mouth of a drunken bully, may, in the opinion of Mr. T. Swift, have suggested the noted ridicule on transubstantiation. It occurs in the tenth chapter of the History of Paul the Sharper.

While on this subject, the Editor cannot suppress his opinion, that Swift's commentators have, in some instances, overstrained his allegory, and attempted to extort deep and recondite allusions, from passages where the meaning lay near the surface. Thus, the wars between the Eolists and the monster Moulinavent, appear to mean nothing more than that the fanatics, described under the former denomination, spent their time in combating imaginary spiritual obstacles to their salvation, as the distempered imagination of Don Quixote converted wind-mills into giants.

Digitized by Google

ilar reasons, the Tale of a Tub was hailed by the infidel philosophers on the Continent, as a work well calculated to advance the cause of scepticism; and, as such, was recommended by Voltaire to his proselytes, because the ludicrous combinations which are formed in the mind by the perusal, tend to lower the respect due to revelation. Swift's attachment to the real interests of religion are so well known, that he would doubtless rather have burned his manuscript, than incurred the slightest risk of injuring them. But the indirect consequences of ridicule, when applied to subjects of sacred importance, are more extensive, and more prejudicial than can be calculated by the author, who, with his eye fixed on the main purpose of his satire, is apt to overlook its more remote effects.

The Tale of a Tub had for some years attracted the notice of the public, when Dr. Thomas Swift, already mentioned as Swift's relation and fellow-student at Trinity College, set up pretensions to a share in that humorous composition. These he promulgated, in what he was pleased to entitle, "A Complete Key to the Tale of a Tub," printed in 1710, containing a flimsy explanation of the prominent points of the allegory, and averring the author to be "Thomas Swift, grandson to Sir William Davenant, and Jonathan Swift, cousin-german to Thomas Swift, both retainers to Sir William Temple." *Our* Swift, it may be easily imagined, was not greatly pleased by an arrangement, in which his cousin is distinguished as a wit, and an author by descent, and he himself only introduced as his relative; and still less could he endure his arrogating the principal share of the composition, and the corresponding insinuation, that the work had suffered by his cousin Jonathan's inability to support the original plan. The real author, who, at the time the Key appeared, was busied in revising a new edition of the book, wrote a letter to his bookseller, Benjamin Tooke, sufficiently expressive of his feelings.* "I have just now your

* Dr. Thomas Swift's pretensions are thus arrogantly set forth in a sort of preface to the Key, on the occasion of writing the Tale of a Tub, "A

Digitized by Google

last, with the complete Key. I believe it so perfect a Grub-street piece, it will be forgotten in a week. But it is strange that there can be no satisfaction against a bookseller for publishing names in so bold a manner.

"A preface of the bookseller to the reader, before the Battle of the Books, shows the cause and design of the whole work, which was performed by a couple of young clergymen in the year 1697; who, having been domestic chaplains to Sir William Temple, thought themselves obliged to take up his quarrel, in relation to the controversy then in dispute between him and Mr. Wotton, concerning Ancient and Modern Learning.

"The one of them began a defence of Sir William under the title of the Tale of a Tub; wherein he intended to couch the general history of Christianity, showing the rise of all the remarkable errors of the Roman church, in the same order they entered, and how the Reformation endeavoured to root them out again, with the different temper of Luther from Calvin, (and those more violent spirits,) in the way of his reforming. His aim was to ridicule the stubborn errors of the Romish church, and the humours of the fanatic party; and to show that their superstition has somewhat very fantastical in it, which is common to both of them, notwithstanding the abhorrence they seem to have for one another.

"The author intended to have it very regular, and withal so particular, that he thought not to pass by the rise of any one single error, or its reformation. He designed at last to show the purity of the church in the primitive times; and consequently how weakly Mr. Wotton passed his judgment, and how partially, in preferring the modern divinity before the ancient, with the confutation of whose book he intended to conclude. But when he had not yet gone half way, his companion, borrowing the manuscript to peruse, carried it with him to Ireland, and having kept it seven years, at last published it imperfect; for indeed he was not able to carry it on after the intended method: for divinity, though it chanced to be his profession, had been the least of his study. However, he added to it the Battle of the Books, wherein he effectually pursues the main design of lashing Mr. Wotton; and having added a jocose epistle dedicatory to my Lord Somers, and another to Prince Posterity, with a pleasant preface, and interlarded with four digressions:—1. Concerning critics;—2. In the modern kind;—3. In praise of digressions;—4. Concerning the use and improvement of madness (with which he was not unacquainted) in a commonwealth; concludes the book with a fragment of the first author's, being a Mechanical Account of the Operation of the Spirit, and which he intended should have come in about the middle of the Tale, as a preliminary to Jack's character.

"Having thus shown the reasons of the little order observed in the book, and the imperfectness of the Tale, it is so submitted to the reader's censure."—*A Complete Key to the Tale of a Tub*, London, 1714, 12mo. 3d edit.

Digitized by Google

I wish some lawyer could advise you how I might have satisfaction; for at this rate there is no book, however vile, which may not be fastened on me. I cannot but think that little parson-cousin of mine is at the bottom of this; for having lent him a copy of some part of, &c. and, he showing it, after I was gone for Ireland, and the thing abroad, he affected to talk suspiciously, as if he had some share in it. If he should happen to be in town, and you light on him, I think you ought to tell him gravely, 'That, if he be the author, he should set his name to the,' &c., and rally him a little upon it; and tell him, 'if he can explain some things, you will, if he pleases, set his name to the next edition.' I should be glad to see how far the foolish impudence of a dunce would go." Swift's Works, Vol. XV. p. 363.

After all, as there is seldom any falsehood without some slight tincture of sophisticated truth, it is possible that Swift, who was neither a polemical divine nor a logician, may have used his parson-cousin's accomplishments in these sciences, to save him some labour and research, and on such communication the conceited pedant may have rested his claim to a share in composing this satirical master-piece.* But, although Swift resented his cousin's presumption, he was himself far from openly avowing the production. From Tooke the bookseller, to whom he was transmitting the additions made in the edition 1711, it was, of course, impossible to conceal it; and Faulkner pretended, that in the latter part of Swift's life, he owned it to him also, in direct terms. But, as the Dean maintained the strictest reserve upon the subject with his intimate friends, it can scarce be supposed he should be unnecessarily commu-

* Thomas Swift was afterwards Rector of Puttenham in Surrey, and published a sermon in 1710, entitled "Noah's Dove, an Exhortation to Peace." This sermon some knavish bookseller reprinted under the title of Dr. Swift's sermon, that it might be attributed to the real author's illustrious relative. See Swift's Works, Vol. II. p. 410. This confusion of persons and productions gave occasion to the Earl of Oxford's raillery, who used to teaze Swift, by calling him Dr. Thomas.

Digitized by Google

nicative to a person in Faulkner's situation. The following anecdote may be depended upon. Mrs. Whiteway observed the Dean, in the latter years of his life, looking over the Tale, when suddenly closing the book, he muttered, in an unconscious soliloquy, "Good God! what a genius I had when I wrote that book!"—an exclamation which resembles that of Marlborough, in a similar declension of faculties, when, gazing on his own portrait, he uttered the pathetic reflection, "That was once a man." Mrs. Whiteway begged the volume of the Dean, who made some excuse at the moment, but, on recurrence of her birthday, he presented her with the book, inscribed "From her affectionate cousin." On observing the inscription, she ventured to say, "I wish, sir, you had said, 'the gift of the author.'" The Dean bowed, smiled good-humouredly, and answered, "No, I thank you," in a very significant manner.*

Notwithstanding the silence of the real author, and the usurped title of Dr. Thomas Swift, no one appears to have entertained any doubt upon the subject; and the society of the vicar of Laracor was assiduously cultivated by men of the first distinction for birth and talents. Of its effect in this respect, Swift was himself sufficiently conscious, and points it out to Stella, though with the ambiguity he generally used in writing concerning his own publications, as the source of his favourable reception with Lord Oxford's ministry. "They may talk of the *you know what*, but, Gad, if it had not been for that, I should never have been able to get the success I have had; and if that helps me to succeed, then that *same thing* will be serviceable to the church." But long before high-churchmen acknowledged its merit, the author of this extraordinary performance

* This anecdote is given on the authority of Mr. Theophilus Swift. The volume was in Mr. T. Swift's possession till very lately. The Dean had corrected, with his pen, all the abbreviations and elisions which were ordinary in the beginning of the century, by replacing *it is* for *'tis*, *the end* for *th' end*, and the like, but without any other alterations. On the blank leaf was written, "To Mrs. Martha Whiteway, a present on her birth-day, May 29, 1735, from her affectionate cousin, JONATH. SWIFT."

Digitized by Google

had been caressed by those of the opposite party, with whom he coincided in temporal, though not in ecclesiastical politics. These were Lord Somers, Lord Halifax, the Earl of Pembroke, and Bishop Burnet, among the statesmen; and among the learned and witty, Addison, Steele, Philips, Anthony Henley,* and Tickell.

Among the friendships thus acquired, the love and intimacy of Addison were particularly valued by Swift; and when they spent their hours together, they never wished for the entrance of a third person. A copy of Addison's travels, presented by him to our author, is inscribed "To Doctor Jonathan Swift, the most agreeable companion, the truest friend, and the greatest genius of his age, this book is presented by his most humble servant, the author."† Nor was Swift backward in expressing similar sentiments towards his distinguished contemporary. He mentions him repeatedly in his correspondence, as a most excellent person, and his own most intimate friend.‡ It is painful to reflect, that friendship between two men of such eminent talents should have been chilled by their difference in political opinions. But the placid and gentle temper of Addison appears to have avoided those extremities which took place between Swift and Steele, and thus there was an opening for the revival of their intercourse at a subsequent period, a circumstance hitherto unnoticed by Swift's biographers.

The powers which had acquired for Swift these friends and this station in society, were taxed for the support and extent of his fame. He appears to have

* The proprietor of the Grange in Hampshire, to whom Garth dedicated the Dispensary. Several of his letters occur in the early part of Swift's correspondence. He was a man of great wit and humour, and was distinguished as the author of a letter to the Tatler, under the character of old Downes the prompter, in which he ridicules the administration which was just formed by the Earl of Oxford, under the allegory of a change of managers at the theatre. About this Swift and he probably differed, when Henley, whose wit sometimes bordered on profaneness, pronounced "That Jonathan would be a beast for ever, after the order of Melchisedec."

† From the obliging information of Mr. Theophilus Swift.

‡ See his Works, Vol. XV. p. 324.

Digitized by Google

designed, about this time, to engage in the controversy concerning the deistical opinions expressed in Dr. Tindal's Rights of the Christian Church, and had collected materials for a severe and scalping answer to that once famous publication. Swift was afterwards not unwilling to have it thought that these remarks, (which were never finished,) were not only levelled against the opinions of infidels and latitudinarians, but involved an indirect attack upon the state Whigs, among whom these latitudinarians chiefly sheltered their heretical opinions. But he has at this period recorded himself, in the conclusion of his verses to Ardelia, as "a Whig, and one who wears a gown;" a memorable line, expressive that the principles which then ruled his mind, were an attachment to the liberties of his country in state politics, and to the rights of his order in those of the church. These points, however reconcilable in themselves, were, in general estimation, usually regarded as in opposition to each other; a high-church whig was a political character, of which all parties refused to recognize the existence. Swift saw and felt the difficulty of preserving consistency in the eyes of the public, and busied himself, according to his own account, with projects for the uniting of parties, which he perfected over night, and destroyed in the morning. One tract, however, the "Sentiments of a Church of England Man, with respect to Religion, and Government," escaped this condemnation, and was published in 1708. It contains a statement concerning the national religious establishment, fair, temperate, and manly, unless where it may be thought too strongly to favour the penal laws against non-conformity. In civil politics, the revolution principles are strongly advocated; and the final conclusion is, that, "in order to preserve the constitution entire in church and state, whoever has a true value for both, would be sure to avoid the extremes of Whig, for the sake of the former, and the extremes of Tory, on account of the latter." But moderation in politics, however reasonable in itself, and though recommended by the powers of Swift, has been always too cold for the temper of the English

Digitized by Google

nation. All that they could or would understand from the sentiment above expressed, was, that the author was disposed to leave the political party with which he had hitherto acted, and was anticipating an apology for uniting with the Tories. And these auspicions were confirmed in the eyes of the party which entertained them, when he published, in 1708-9, the "Letter upon the Sacramental Test," opposing, by every argument of reason and ridicule, which his prompt imagination should supply, any relaxation of this important legal disability. The author, indeed, for some time remained unknown; and Swift, in a letter to Archbishop King, even affects to complain of the misrepresentation which he himself undergoes in that celebrated tract.* But the world was not long deceived. The chaplain of Lord Wharton, and others, soon discovered the real author; and to this circumstance he traces the commencement of the coolness betwixt him and his friends of the Whig party.†

Meanwhile Swift displayed his zeal for the interest of the church of England, by his actions, as well as by his writings. Queen Anne, upon the motion, it is said, of Bishop Burnet, had made, in 1703-4, a grant of the first fruits and tenths,‡ to augment the maintenance of the poor clergy of England. The clergy of Ireland were naturally desirous to obtain the same boon; but hitherto their various applications had been rejected. In 1708, Swift, who had been an active member of the Irish convocation in the preceding year, was employed by Archbishop King, and the rest of the Irish prelacy, to solicit the remission of the first-fruits. He made his

* Swift's Works, Vol. XV. p. 323.

† Memoirs relative to the change of ministry, Swift's Works, Vol. III. p. 190.

‡ This was a tax imposed originally upon church-livings, for maintenance of the crusade: it continued to be levied as a branch of the papal revenue, until the time of Henry VIII., when it was seized upon by that monarch, and settled by Parliament as a part of the income of the crown for ever. The tenths averaged near 11,000*l.* yearly; and the first-fruits about 5000*l.* This fund, though so considerable, was never applied to any national purpose, but usually employed to gratify the court-favourites of the day.

Digitized by Google

application to Lord Godolphin, by the encouragement of Lord Sunderland, Lord Somers, Mr. Southwell, and other leading members among the ministry. But it was ineffectual. The grant of the first-fruits and tenths in England, had not been attended with the expected consequences of reconciling the clergy to the ministers, by whom the favour was bestowed, and the lord treasurer showed little inclination to repeat so expensive an experiment. Yet he intimated to Swift, that the grant *might* be obtained, on condition the Irish clergy were disposed to make such acknowledgments "as they ought;" or, as he reluctantly explained the phrase, better acknowledgments than had been made by the church of England. Swift's inference was, that Godolphin suspected the clergy to be *Tories* in the English sense, that is, hostile to the revolution and settlement of the crown; a prepossession which rendered his commission desperate. And though he afterwards was put into better hopes by Lord Pembroke, yet his first opinion proved just, and nothing was done in the matter till the administration of Harley. While acting as solicitor in this business, Swift appears, from his correspondence, to have resided in England from February 1707-8, until the end of April 1709.

During his residence at London, Swift was not altogether negligent of his own interest. Considering himself as useless in Ireland, "in a parish with an audience of half a score," he was willing to have accepted the office of secretary of embassy, had Lord Berkeley gone as ambassador to Vienna. But this purpose was disappointed by Lord Berkeley's age and infirmities, which did not permit him to undertake the office. There was also a plan suggested, perhaps by Colonel Hunter, governor of Virginia, to send out Dr. Swift as bishop of that province, to exercise a sort of metropolitan authority over the colonial clergy. But neither did this appointment take place. Thus disappointed, Swift was still entitled to look for preferment, through the interest of those powerful persons who had professed themselves his friends, and who, about this time, had themselves received promotion. Lord Pembroke was

Digitized by Google

bended high admiral, Lord Somers president of the council, and Lord Wharton lord-lieutenant of Ireland, with whom Addison went over as secretary. Some hopes, accordingly, Swift seems to have entertained; for he takes the pains about this time to assure Archbishop King, that no preferment which he might receive from the government should lead him to flinch in his attachment to the interests of the established church. From a letter to Addison also, to be quoted in the next section, it seems that Swift expected, either the prebendary of Dr. South, then supposed to be dying, for which Halifax deeply pledges his interest, or some such sinecure as the post of historiographer. But it is one thing to expect promotion on fair and honourable terms, and another to supplicate for it in a mean and abject manner. And to suppose, as has been insinuated by one writer, that Swift mendicated from Lord Somers a recommendation to Lord Wharton, to be his chaplain, and that his subsequent union with the Tories, was owing to Wharton's scornful refusal to countenance a fellow of no character,* would require

* This strange account is given in the curious and excellent edition of the Tatler, already quoted in p. 29, and rests on the sole authority of Dr. Salter of the Charter-house. It is in these words: "Lord Somers recommended Swift, at his own very earnest request, to Lord Wharton, when that earl went lieutenant to Ireland, in 1708, but without success, and the answer Wharton is said to have given, was never forgotten or forgiven by Swift, but seems to have laid the foundation of that peculiar rancour, with which he always mentions Lord Wharton. I saw and read two letters of Jonathan Swift, then Prebendary of St. Patrick, Dublin, to Lord Somers; the first, earnestly entreating his favour, pleading his poverty, and professing the most ardent attachment to his lordship's person, friends, and cause; the second, acknowledging Lord Somers's kindness, in having recommended him, and concluding with the like professions; not more than a year before Swift deserted Lord Somers and all his friends, writing avowedly on the contrary side, and, as he boasts himself, libelling all the junto round. I saw also the very letters which Lord Somers wrote to Lord Wharton, in which Swift is very heartily and warmly recommended, and I well remember the short and very smart answer Lord Wharton is said to have given, which, as I observed, Swift never forgave or forgot. It was to this purpose, 'Oh! my lord, we must not prefer or countenance these fellows; we have not character enough ourselves.'" Such

Digitized by Google

very different proof from the assertion of an individual, that he had seen letters, which in his opinion warranted the conclusion. The allegation which charges such a character with meanness and servility, inconsistent with the whole tenour of his life, requires better evidence than a reference to vouchers, neither quoted nor produced; for there are few who will not rather believe the reporter to have been misguided by prejudice, or mistaken in judgment, than that Swift should, in this instance, have departed from the proud and stern tone of independence, which rejected the patronage of Temple in his youth, and vindicated in his age the liberties of Ireland.* Swift himself, indeed, informs us, that

Such are the words of a letter by Dr. Salter, addressed to the Editor of the Gentleman's Magazine, then conducted by Mr. Calder, a zealous Presbyterian, and in no degree friendly to the memory of Swift; and by whom it seems to have been coupled with the story of the rape at Kilroot, mentioned in the last section. A note avowed, that any explanation from a friend of Swift's would be received and inserted. A defence, founded upon the circumstances of evidence already noticed, was transmitted to the Magazine by Mr. Theophilus Swift, but refused admittance, as being too long. Both stories were then inserted in the elaborate and curious edition of the Tatler, in the notes to which they may be found, vol. V. p. 145. Mr. George Monck Berkeley makes the following pertinent queries on the sort of evidence here produced: "We are told, Dr. Salter saw these letters. But where did he see them? In whose possession were they? How did he know they were genuine, &c.? Was he sure Lord Wharton made the reply ascribed to him? Did he see that in writing, or did he take it on report?" To these questions, which occur in the Literary Reliques, p. 41, no answer has been made, though the date of the second edition is 1792. It has, however, been pointed out to the present editor, by a person of high rank, that Dr. Salter, having been college tutor to the Earl of Hardwicke, son to the chancellor, may have seen such a correspondence as he pretends to quote, among Lord Somers's papers, which came into the chancellor's hands by his marriage with a niece of Lord Somers. These papers were lent to the Honourable Philip Yorke, and destroyed by a fire at Lincoln's Inn, from which he himself narrowly escaped. But this, it is obvious, must be matter of mere supposition, and Dr. Salter's silence to Mr. Monck Berkeley's challenge has still its full weight.

* Mr. Monck Berkeley thus sums and refutes the evidence which is advanced from Swift's own correspondence, to support the legend of Dr. Salter:—

"Swift says," according to the note in the Tatler, "that, at the request of Archbishop Tennison, and several Irish bishops, the chap-

Digitized by Google

Lord Somers pressed upon him a letter to be carried by him to the Earl of Wharton, which he long declined to receive, and for some time delayed to deliver, and that, when he did deliver it, no consequence followed in his favour. Thus far, therefore, parties are at one; and it only remains to enquire, whether the favour of Lord Somers's intercession was asked with servility, or so granted, that, notwithstanding its proving totally ineffectual, the circumstance of its existence is sufficient to fix the brand of ingratitude upon Swift's character, for the reflections he has cast upon Lord Somers in the Examiner. On the first point, the reader may look at a letter of Lord Halifax, on the subject of Swift's promotion in the church, and consider whether the individual, whose lack of preferment is stated by that nobleman to

laincy was refused to him, and given to Dr. Lambert. He says that Lord Somers wrote to Lord Wharton. He says that he expects the chaplaincy; seems displeased at the preference shown to Dr. Lambert; positively denies to Archbishop King having made any application for the chaplaincy. He does the same to Dr. Sterne. Lastly, he calls Lord Somers a false, deceitful rascal."

"As I readily admit," says Mr. M. Berkeley, in reply, "the exactness of these quotations, I shall proceed to enquire what they prove. The first extract proves nothing but that Swift was persecuted by a parcel of right reverend blockheads. The second extract proves, that Lord Somers applied for the chaplaincy, but no mention is made of its having been done at the request of Swift. The third extract proves, that he expected the chaplaincy, which, after the recommendation of Lord Somers, he might very reasonably do. The fourth extract proves, that to Swift, as to the rest of the world, a disappointment was unpleasant. The fifth extract proves, that he never did apply for the chaplaincy. The sixth extract also proves, that no application was made for the chaplaincy. The seventh extract proves, that he thought of Lord Somers as most people did who knew him." *Literary Reliques, Introduction*, p. 43. With exception of the disparagement thrown on the character of Somers, which few readers will readily admit, it seems difficult to draw any other conclusion from the correspondence of Swift, than that of Mr. Monck Berkeley. Certainly it is not sufficient to establish a story destructive of any individual's reputation, that the accused party has given a different relation of the transaction, altogether inconsistent with the defamatory and malignant inferences of the accuser. And since it becomes necessary to balance the reputation of the reporters of these various editions of the same story, the editor is compelled to add, upon the authority of the late excellent Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore, that the assertion of Dr. Salter, by itself, was by no means fit to support an anecdote otherwise deficient in evidence.

Digitized by Google

be a shame to himself and his whole party, and who is there expressly promised the survivance of Dr. South's prebendary, was likely to have occasion to apply to Lord Somers in the degrading manner which Dr. Salter has intimated. Whether Swift acted justly in doubting the sincerity of Lord Somers, we have no means of determining; but we know that his lordship's intercession was totally ineffectual; and that is a circumstance which seems strange, if it were indeed as earnest as Dr. Salter informs us. That Swift should have expected the chaplaincy from Lord Wharton, through the mediation of Lord Somers, argues no unreasonable confidence in the friendship of that great statesman, who had sought him out, and courted his company; and that, when disappointed of those hopes, he was angry both with Somers and Wharton, and considered it as owing to a juggle betwixt them, only proves, that, like the rest of mankind, he was irritated by disappointment, and by the neglect of those friends who could certainly have served him, had their intentions been as serious as their professions were fair. And if mere promises, whether fulfilled or neglected, bind to gratitude those in whose favour they are made, it is a better reason for their being liberally dispensed by courtiers and statesmen, than any which has been assigned for so general a practice. Upon the whole, we do no injustice to the relaters of this tale, in refusing credence to allegations unsupported by evidence,—brought forward so many years after Swift's death,—inconsistent with the whole tenour of his life and character,*—and depending merely upon the report of a self-constituted and prejudiced reporter.

The publications of Swift, during this period, were not entirely confined to the feverish subject of politics. His Project for the Advancement of Religion, published in 1709, made a deep and powerful sensation on all who

* Oldmixon's authority might indeed be quoted in support of the figment. But that willing evidence goes a little too far, since he informs us in his history, p. 426, that Jonathan Swift was actually preferred by Lord Wharton to be one of his chaplains, which he repaid by libelling his benefactor in the Examiner, under the character of Verres.

Digitized by Google

considered national prosperity as connected with national morals. It may in some respects be considered as a sequel of the humorous Argument against abolishing Christianity. Several of Swift's biographers affect to discover a political tendency in the treatise; but excepting the complaint against the contempt of the clergy, which circumstances had then rendered more common, from their very generally entertaining Tory principles, it is difficult to trace any opinion which could give offence, even to the spleen of faction. The main argument, of taking away the wicked from before the throne, that it might be established in righteousness, is obviously more laudable than capable of application to practical use; and Swift's plan of censors or inspectors, who should annually make circuits of the kingdom, and report, upon oath, to the court or ministry, the state of public morals, would, from the natural frailty of human nature, be gradually converted into a most oppressive abuse. With better chance of practical and effectual reform, the author recommends to the court, to discourage characters of marked and notorious impiety; to revise, with more attention to moral and religious qualifications, the lists of justices of peace; to suppress the gross indecency and profaneness of the stage; and to increase the number of churches in the city of London. The last of these useful and practical hints alone was attended to; for, in the subsequent administration of Harley, fifty new churches were erected in the city of London, almost avowedly upon the suggestion of this pamphlet. The treatise was dedicated in an elegant, yet manly and independent style of eulogy, to Lady Berkeley, whose character, as we have already noticed, was justly venerated by the author. It was very favourably received by the public, and appears to have been laid before Queen Anne by the Archbishop of York, the very prelate who had denounced to her private ear the author of the Tale of a Tub, as a divine unworthy of church-preferment. The work was also commended in the Tatler, as that of a man whose virtue sits easy about him, and to whom vice is thoroughly contemptible,—who writes very much like a gentleman, and goes to heaven with a very good mien.

Digitized by Google

A lighter species of literary amusement, occasionally occupied Swift's time during this part of his life, and gave exercise to his peculiar talent of humour. Astrologers, though no longer consulted by princes and nobles, as was the case but a century before, retained still a sort of empire over the minds of the middling and lower classes, whom their almanacks instructed, not only in the stated revolutions of the planetary system, but in the fit times of physic and blood-letting,—the weather to be expected in particular months,—and, though expressed with due and prophetic ambiguity, in the public events which should occur in the course of the year. Among these empirics, one John Partridge, (if that was indeed his real name,*) had the fortune to procure a ludicrous immortality, by attracting the satire of Swift. This fellow, who was as ignorant and impudent as any of his canting fraternity, besides having published various astrological treatises, was the editor of an almanack, under the title of Merlinus Liberatus.

* Little is known of Partridge's private history, except from an altercation betwixt him and one Parker, which, of course, involved much personal abuse. According to his adversary, Partridge's real name was Hewson, a shoemaker by trade, (which particular at least is undoubted,) but by choice a confederate and dependent of old Gadbury, one of the greatest knaves who followed the knavish trade of astrology. In 1679, Partridge commenced business for himself, publishing two or three nonsensical works upon his imaginary science. He also practised physic, and styled himself Physician to his Majesty. But in King James's time, his almanacks grew so smart on Popery, that England became too hot for him; and, accordingly, John Dunton found him, with other refugees, in Holland. He returned at the Revolution, and married the widow of the Duke of Monmouth's tailor, who finally deposited him in the grave, which had so long gaped for him, in the year 1715, and adorned his monument, at Mortlake in Surrey, with the following epitaph:—"*Johannes Partridge, astrologus, et medicinæ doctor, natus est apud East Sheen, in comitatu Surry,* 18 *die Januarii, anno* 1644, *et mortuus est Londini,* 24 *die Junii, anno* 1715. *Medicinam fecit duobus Regibus unique Reginæ; Carolo scilicet Secundo, Willielmo Tertio, Reginæque Mariæ; Creatus Medicinæ Doctor Lugduni Batavorum.*" GRANGER, vol. IV. p. 105. Ed. 1804. Granger further acquaints us, that, in the Miscellanea Lipsiensia, Tom. II. p. 763, the obituary for 1715, distinguishes, among other deaths, ex ordine philosophorum, "Joannes Partridgi, Astronomus et Astrologus in Anglia famigeritissimus."

Digitized by Google

Swift, in ridicule of the whole class of impostors, and of this man in particular, published his celebrated "Predictions for the year 1708, by Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq." which, amongst other prognostications, announced, with the most happy assumption of the mixture of caution and precision affected by these annual soothsayers, an event of no less importance than the death of John Partridge himself, which he fixed to the 29th of March, about eleven at night. The wrath of the astrologer was, of course, extreme, and, in his almanack for 1709, he was at great pains to inform his loving countrymen, that Squire Bickerstaff was a sham name, assumed by a lying, impudent fellow, and that, "blessed be God, John Partridge was still living, and in health, and all were knaves who reported otherwise."* This round denial did not save him from further persecution. The Vindication of Isaac Bickerstaff appeared, with several other treatises upon a subject which seems greatly to have amused the public. At length poor

* The secret of Bickerstaff's real name was probably for a time well kept, for poor Partridge, unwilling, as an astrologer, to appear ignorant of any thing, thus opens manfully on a false scent, in a letter, dated London, 2d April 1708, addressed to Isaac Manley, post-master of Ireland, who, to add to the jest, was a particular friend of Swift, his real tormentor. The letter is preserved in the valuable edition of the Tatler, 1786, vol. V. where the appendix contains a very full account of the unlucky astrologer.

"OLD FRIEND,

"I don't doubt but you are imposed upon in Ireland also, by a pack of rogues, about my being dead; the principal author of it is one in Newgate, lately in the pillory for a libel against the state. There is no such man as Bickerstaff; it is a sham name, but his true name is Pettie; he is always in a garret, a cellar, or a jail; and therefore you may by that judge what kind of reputation this fellow hath to be credited in the world. In a word, he is a poor, scandalous, necessitous creature, and would do as much by his own father, if living, to get a crown; but enough of such a rascal. I thank God I am very well in health; and at the time he had doomed me to death I was not in the least out of order. The truth is, it was a high flight at a venture, hit or miss. He knows nothing of astrology, but hath a good stock of impudence and lying. Pray, sir, excuse this trouble, for no man can better tell you I am well than myself; and this is to undeceive your credulous friends that may yet believe the death of your real humble servant,

"JOHN PARTRIDGE."

Digitized by Google

Partridge, despairing, by mere dint of his own assertions, to maintain the fact of his life and identity, had recourse, in an evil hour, to his neighbour, Dr. Yalden, who stated his grievances to the public in a pamphlet, called "Bickerstaff Detected, or the Astrological Impostor convicted," in which, under Partridge's name, he gave such a burlesque account of his sufferings, through the prediction of Bickerstaff, as makes one of the most humorous tracts in this memorable controversy. In 1710, Swift published a famous prediction of Merlin, the British wizard, giving, in a happy imitation of the style of Lily, a commentary on some black-letter verses, most ingeniously composed in enigmatical reference to the occurrences of the time. There were two incidental circumstances worthy of notice in this ludicrous debate: 1*st*, The Inquisition of the kingdom of Portugal took the matter as seriously as John Partridge, and gravely condemned to the flames the predictions of the imaginary Isaac Bickerstaff. 2*dly*, By an odd coincidence, the company of stationers obtained, in 1709, an injunction against any almanack published under the name of John Partridge, as if the poor man had been dead in sad earnest. Swift appears to have been the inventor of the jest, and the soul of the confederacy under whose attacks Partridge suffered for about two years; but Prior, Rowe, Steele, Yalden, and other wits of the time, were concerned in the conspiracy, which might well have overwhelmed a brighter genius than the ill-fated Philo-math.

But the most memorable consequence of the predictions of Isaac Bickerstaff,* was the establishment of the Tatler, the first of that long series of periodical works, which, from the days of Addison to those of Mackenzie, have enriched our literature with so many effusions of genius, humour, wit, and learning. It appears that Swift was in the secret of Steele's undertaking from

* Swift is said to have taken the name of Bickerstaff from a smith's sign, and added that of Isaac, as a Christian appellation of uncommon occurrence. Yet it was said a living person was actually found who owned both names.

Digitized by Google

the beginning, though Addison only discovered it after the publication of the sixth number. By the assumption of the name of Isaac Bickerstaff, which an inimitable spirit of wit and humour had already made so famous, the new publication gained audience with the public, and obtained, under its authority, a sudden and general acceptance. Swift contributed several papers, and numerous hints to carrying on the undertaking, until the demon of politics disturbed his friendship with the editor.

These literary amusements, with the lines on Partridge's supposed death, the verses on Baucis and Philemon, those on Vanbrugh's house at Whitehall, with some other light pieces of occasional humour, seem chiefly to have occupied Swift's leisure about this period. Yet the controversy with Partridge, and these other levities, are better known to the general reader, than the laboured political treatises which we shall have occasion to mention in the next section.

To conclude the present chapter, it is only necessary to resume, that Dr. Swift, dissatisfied with the inefficient patronage of those ministerial friends from whom he had only received compliments, promises, and personal attentions, returned to Ireland early in summer 1709, and, estranging himself from the court of the lord-lieutenant, resumed his wonted mode of life at Laracor. The corrections and additions intended for his new edition of the Tale of a Tub, probably occupied great part of his leisure, as we find him corresponding upon that subject with Tooke, the bookseller He seems also to have meditated the publication of a volume of miscellanies.* But his literary occupations

* See his correspondence on this subject, in his Works, Vol. XV. p. 364. On the subject of his Miscellanies, he had, so far back as 1708, made the following memorandum :—

SUBJECTS FOR A VOLUME.

Discourse on Athens and Rome.	Vanbrugh's House.
Bickerstaff's Predictions.	The Salamander.
Elegy on Partridge.	Epigram on Mrs. Floyd.
Letter to Bishop of K[illala.]	Meditation on a Broomstick.

Digitized by Google

were broken in upon by domestic affliction, for, in May 1710, he received the news of his affectionate mother's death, after long illness. "I have now," he pathetically remarks, "lost my barrier between me and death. God grant I may live to be as well prepared for it as I confidently believe her to have been! If the way to heaven be through piety, truth, justice, and charity, she is there."*

SECTION III.

Swift's Journey to England, in 1710—His quarrel with the Whigs, and union with Harley and the Administration—He writes the Examiner—The character of Lord Wharton—And other political tracts—Obtains the First-Fruits and Twentieth-Parts for the Irish Clergy—His correspondence with Archbishop King—His intimacy with the Ministers—The services which he renders to them—Project for improving the English Language—His protection of Literary Characters—Difficulties attending his church preferment—He is made Dean of St. Patrick's—And returns to Ireland.

SWIFT had now become more than doubtful of those well-grounded views of preferment, which his interest with the great Whig leaders naturally offered. He re-

Harris's Petition.
Baucis and Philemon.
Reasons against abolishing Christianity.
Essay on Conversation.
Conjectures on the Thoughts of Posterity about me.
On the present Taste of Reading.
Apology for the Tale, &c.
Sentiments of a Church of England Man.
Part of an Answer to Tindal.
History of Van's House.
Apollo outwitted. To Ardelia.
Project for Reformation of Manners.
A Lady's Table-book.
Critical Essay.—N.

* Swift's Works, Vol. XV. p. 355.

Digitized by Google

sided at Laracor during the greater part of Lord Wharton's administration; saw the lieutenant very seldom when he came to Dublin, and entered into no degree of intimacy with him or his friends, excepting only with Addison. Such is his own account of his conduct, which he prepared for publication at a time when hundreds were alive and upon the watch to confute any inaccuracy in his statement.* He adds, that upon an approaching change in the political administration, Lord Wharton affected of a sudden greatly to caress him, which he imputes to a wish of rendering him odious to the church party.

The fall of that ministry, which had conducted with so much glory the war upon the Continent, was caused, or at least greatly accelerated, by one of those explosions of popular feeling peculiar to the English nation. Swift, with all his genius, had in vain taught the doctrine of moderation; but Sacheverell, with as little talent as principle, at once roused the whole nation, and became himself elevated into a saint and a martyr, by a single inflammatory sermon. He was carried in procession through the land,

> Per Graium populos, mediæque per Elidis urbem
> Ibat ovans——

and wherever the doctor appeared, arose a popular spirit of aversion to the Whig administration, and all who favoured the dissenters. Swift was probably no indifferent spectator, while the interests of the high-church party began to predominate over the power of those whose opinions in state policy had been avowedly his own. He did not, however, interfere in the controversy; and we learn from a passage in his Journal, that although he afterwards interceded for Sacheverell with Harley's administration, it was without esteem for the

* Memoirs relating to the change in the Queen's ministry, Swift's Works, Vol. III. p. 190. There is also an appeal to Stella on this subject, in the Journal, Vol. II. p. 254. "I am resolved, when I come, (to Ireland, namely,) to keep no other company, but M.D. You know I kept my resolution last time; and, except Mr. Addison, conversed with none but you and your club of Deans and Stoytes."

Digitized by Google

man, or favour to those principles of which the doctor was the champion.* The following letter,† which was written by Swift to Addison, upon the impending change of administration, seems to indicate that his slight expectations of promotion still rested upon the Whigs, and upon Lord Somers in particular. There is, however, to use a phrase of his own, some refinement in the epistle; for while Swift asks Addison's advice whether he should come to London, he had, in all probability, already determined on his journey, as he set out upon the first day of September following.

"Dublin, August 22, 1710.

"I looked long enough at the wind to set you safe at the other side, and then ***** our conduct, very unwilling for fear you [*about two lines are effaced*] up to a post-horse, and hazard your limbs to be made a member. I believe you had the displeasure of much ill news almost as soon as you landed. Even the moderate Tories here are in pain at these revolutions, being what will certain-

* See an account of his solicitation in behalf of Sacheverell's brother, in his Works, Vol. III. p. 20, 21; and the following characteristic story told by Sheridan:—"Afterwards, in the year 1713, soon after the three years silence imposed upon the doctor by the House of Lords, in consequence of his impeachment, had expired, Swift procured for him the Rectory of St. Andrew's, Holborn, in the following whimsical manner:—Upon that living's becoming vacant, he applied for it in behalf of Sacheverell, to Lord Bolingbroke; who seemed not at all disposed in his favour, calling him 'a busy, meddling, factious fellow, one who had set the kingdom in a flame.' To which Swift replied, It is all true, my lord; but let me tell you a story. 'In a sea-fight, in the reign of Charles II., there was a very bloody engagement between the English and Dutch fleets; in the heat of which, a Scotch seaman was very severely bit by a louse on his neck, which he caught, and stooping down to crack it, just as he had put himself in that posture, a chain-shot came and took off the heads of several sailors that were about him; on which he had compassion on the poor louse, returned him to his place, and bid him live there at discretion; for, said he, as thou hast been the means of saving my life, it is but just I should save yours.' Lord Bolingbroke laughed heartily, and said, 'Well then, the louse shall have the living for your story.' And accordingly he was soon after presented to it."—*Sheridan's Life of Swift.*

† The original is among Mr. Tickell's manuscripts. The words in Italics are filled up from conjecture.

Digitized by Google

ly affect the Duke of Marlborough, and consequently the success of the war. My lord-lieutenant asked me yesterday, when I intended for England? I said I had no business there now, since I suppose in a little time I should not have one friend left that had any credit; and his excellency was of my opinion.* I never once began your [*task*] since you [*left this*] being perpetually prevented by all the company I kept, and especially Captain Pratt, to whom I am almost a domestic upon your account. I am convinced that, whatever Government come over, you will find all marks of kindness from any Parliament here, with respect to your employment;† the Tories contending with the Whigs which should speak best of you. Mr. Pratt says, he has received such marks of your sincerity and friendship, as he never can forget; and, in short, if you will come over again, when you are at leisure, we will raise an army, and make you King of Ireland.‡ Can you think so meanly of a kingdom, as not to be pleased that every creature in it, who hath one grain of worth, has a veneration for you? I know there is nothing in this to make you add any value to yourself; but it ought to put you on valuing them, and to convince you that they are not an undistinguishing people. On Thursday, the Bishop of Clogher, the two Pratts, and I, are to be as happy as Ireland will now give us leave; we are to dine with Mr. Paget at the Castle, and drink your health. The bishop showed me the first volume of the small edition of the Tatler, where there is a very handsome compliment to me; but I can never pardon the printing the news of every Tatler—I think he might as well have printed the advertisements. I knew it was a bookseller's piece of craft, to increase the bulk and price of what he was sure would sell; but I utterly disapprove it. I beg you would freely tell me

* Yet Swift must have then expected the commission from the bishops, which was granted a week afterwards. His answer to Lord Wharton must therefore be considered as evasive.

† Addison had been recently made keeper of the records in Ireland, with an augmented salary.

‡ This reminds us of an expression in the Journal to Stella. "Mr. Addison's election has past easy and undisputed; and I believe, if he had a mind to be chosen king, he would hardly be refused."

Digitized by Google

whether it will be of any account for me to come to England. I would not trouble you for advice, if I knew where else to ask it. We expect every day to hear of my lord president's* removal; if he were to continue, I might, perhaps, hope for some of his good offices. You ordered me to give you a memorial of what I had in my thoughts. There were two things, Dr. So———th's prebend† and sinecure, or the place of historiographer. But if things go on in the train they are now, I shall only beg you, when there is an account to be depended on for a new government here, that you will give me early notice, to procure an addition to my fortunes. And, with saying so, I take my leave of troubling you with myself.

"I do not desire to hear from you till you are out of [*the*] hurry at Malmsbury.‡ I long till you have some good account of your Indian affairs, so as to make public business depend upon you, and not you upon that. I read your character in Mrs. Manly's noble Memoirs of Europe.§ It seems to me, as if she had about two thousand epithets and fine words packed up in a bag; and that she pulled them out by handfuls, and strewed them on her paper, where about once in five hundred times they happen to be right.

"My lord-lieutenant, I reckon, will leave us in a fortnight; I led him, by a question, to tell me he did not expect to continue in the government, nor would, when all his friends were out. Pray take some occasion to let my [*Lord*] Halifax know the sense I have of the favour he intended me."

Swift's departure for England was, however, nearer

* Somers.

† The celebrated Dr. South, Prebendary of Westminster, was then very infirm, and far advanced in years. He survived, however, until 1716, and died aged 83. On the subject of Swift's expectations, see Halifax's letter, Swift's Works, Vol. XV. p. 348.

‡ For which borough Addison was a candidate.

§ "Memoirs of Europe towards the close of the eighth century, written by Eginardus, secretary and favourite of Charlemagne, and done into English by the translator of the New Atalantis." In this scandalous lampoon, Addison is introduced under the name of Maro.

Digitized by Google

than this letter announces. The hopes which were now entertained that Queen Anne would once more favour the High interest, had already extended themselves to Ireland, and it was thought by the clergy of that kingdom, a propitious season for renewing their suit for remission of the first-fruits and twentieth-parts, in which they had formerly been unsuccessful. The Bishops of Ossory and Killaloe were employed to solicit a favourable answer to this supplication, and, by a letter from the prelates of Ireland, dated 31st August 1710, Swift was united with them in commission, with a provision, that, in case the bishops should leave London before bringing the business to effect, the charge of further solicitation should entirely devolve upon him.* On the 1st September, therefore, Swift left Ireland, and on the 9th of the same month reached London, where he was at once plunged into that tide of public business,

* Swift has been injuriously charged with having intruded himself into the management of this matter, less from any real concern for its success, than to serve his own interested purposes of self-aggrandizement. The leading fact on which this accusation is founded, is, that, whereas the Bishops of Ossory and Killaloe had their expenses defrayed while engaged in this solicitation, Swift was, on the contrary, left to carry on the warfare on his own charges. And hence it is shrewdly concluded that he must have had some interested purpose of his own to serve, by undertaking an office which could be attended with no other direct reward than the pleasure of advancing his character among his brethren, and essentially serving the church establishment, of which he was a zealous member. To this argument, it seems unnecessary to reply, especially as Swift's nomination appeared natural and proper on so many accounts. His talents could not surely be doubted, nor his zeal, nor his opportunities of obtaining access to the great, nor his acquaintance with the business in which he had formerly been agent.

Indeed, the state of the affair obviously required different management, and more earnest attention than it had yet received. The grant had been first unsuccessfully solicited from Godolphin. It was then submitted to Lord Wharton, while lord-lieutenant of Ireland, in the form of an address and memorial from the Irish convocation. But Wharton, irritated at a dispute which occurred in the lower House of Convocation, in which he conceived himself to be insulted in the person of his chaplain, refused to interest himself in the petition submitted to him, and thus the matter was given up as desperate. Here, therefore, the matter rested, and it required both attention and dexterity to put it once more in motion.

Digitized by Google

of which his Journal to Stella affords such a singular record.

This extraordinary diary is addressed ostensibly to Mrs. Dingley, as well as Stella; but there is no doubt that all the unbounded confidence and tenderness which it exhibits, were addressed to the latter alone. It is a wonderful medley, in which grave reflections and important facts are at random intermingled with trivial occurrences and the puerile jargon of the most intimate tenderness. From Stella, nothing is to be either concealed or disguised; and as the Journal is written during the hurry of every day's occurrences, it rather resembles the author's thoughts expressed aloud, as they passed through his mind, than a connected register of his opinions. What it wants, however, in system and gravity, it gains in authenticity and interest, for the readiness with which the author's pen expresses, in the "little language," every whim which crossed his brain, vouches for his ample and unreserved confidence:—a circumstance which ought to propitiate the offended gravity of those deep critics, who deem the publication of these frolicsome expansions of the heart and spirits derogatory to the character of a great and distinguished author. With gratitude, therefore, for the light afforded upon our author's habits, opinions, and actions, by a record at once so minute and so authentic, we proceed to trace, by its assistance, the principal events of his life during this its most busy period.

Swift arrived in London, already prepossessed with a strong feeling of the neglect which he had experienced from the Whig administration. His old friends, however, appeared ravished to see him; offered apologies for the mode in which he had been treated, and caught at him as at a twig when they were drowning. The influence of Swift's talents upon the public opinion had already been manifested, and the Whigs were doubtless unwilling that their weight should be cast into the opposite scale. Godolphin alone despised to court in his fall the genius which he had neglected while possessed of power. His reception of Swift was short, dry, and morose; and he, who thought he deserved the con-

Digitized by Google

trary from a minister whose principles he had professed and supported, departed, almost vowing revenge.* With Somers, also, he seems at this juncture to have quarrelled. He saw him on his arrival in London, but it was for the last time. This great statesman used some efforts to convince him, that he was serious in his recommending him to Lord Wharton's favour, and had written twice to that nobleman on the subject without receiving an answer. To this Swift answered, that he never expected any thing from Lord Wharton, and that Wharton knew he understood it so. In short, he retained his opinion, that he had been treated with duplicity by Lord Somers, nor does he ever appear to have retracted it. To his literary friends, his arrival was as acceptable as ever. He resumed his intimacy with Addison and Steele, but refused to pledge Lord Halifax, when he proposed as a toast the Resurrection of the Whigs, unless he would add, "and their Reformation." Thus indifferent to the interests of the falling ministry, Swift was still astonished, and shocked at the bold steps taken by the court, in removing so many great statesmen from employment, and promised himself to be an unconcerned spectator of the struggles which such measures were likely to occasion. But let no man promise on his own neutrality. By 1st October, he had written a lampoon on Lord Godolphin,† and on the 4th, he was for the first time presented to Harley; and it is remarkable, that, on the very same day, he refused an invitation from Lord Halifax, thus making his option between those distinguished statesmen.‡

* See Swift's Works, Journal, Vol. II. p. 10; and Letter to Archbishop King, Vol. XV. p. 374.

† Sid Hamet's Rod; composed on occasion of Godolphin's breaking his treasurer's staff, in a manner not very respectful to the queen, his mistress.

‡ Mr. Deane Swift has the following note upon Swift's connexion with Lord Halifax:—"What obligation Swift had to that lord, and his party, may be seen by his endorsement on a letter, dated Oct. 6, 1709. 'I kept this letter as a true original of courtiers, and court promises.' And in the first leaf of a small printed book, entitled, 'Poesies Chrétiennes des Mons. Jolivet,' he wrote these words, 'Given me by my Lord Halifax, May 3, 1709. I begged it of him, and desired him to remember, it was the only favour I ever received from him or his party.'"—S.

Digitized by Google

Harley had been prepared to meet Swift as one whose political tenets resembled his own, (for he also had been bred up in revolution principles,) but who was now a discontented person, ill used, for not being "Whig enough," by the last administration. He was received, accordingly, with all that kindness and respect which statesmen know so well how to show towards those whose attachment they deem worth securing. In the same paragraph which acquaints Stella with this first interview with the new prime minister, Swift announces that he has given his lampoon against Godolphin to the press, and already threatens "to go round with them all." They met, therefore, with mutual views of union, Swift anxious to avenge the neglect with which he had been treated by the Whigs, and to advance the mission of which he was the solicitor, and Harley desirous of bringing to the support of the new administration an author of talents so formidable and so popular. By Harley Swift was introduced to St. John, (afterwards Lord Bolingbroke,) and the intercourse which he enjoyed with these ministers approached to intimacy with a progress more rapid than can well be conceived in such circumstances.*

* The following passages in the Journal to Stella, with the dates, mark how rapidly Swift passed from acquaintance to intimate friendship, and a conformity of views and interests:—

"Oct. 4, 1710.—Mr. Harley received me with the greatest respect and kindness imaginable, and appointed me an hour, two or three days after, to open my business to him."

"Oct. 7.—I had no sooner told him my business, but he entered into it with all kindness; asked me for my powers, and read them; and read likewise the memorial I had drawn up, and put it into his pocket to show the queen: told me the measures he would take; and, in short, said every thing I could wish. Told me he must bring Mr. St. John and me acquainted; and spoke so many things of personal kindness and esteem, that I am inclined to believe what some friends had told me, that he would do every thing to bring me over. He desired me to dine with him on Tuesday; and, after four hours being with him, set me down at St. James's coffee-house in a hackney-coach.

"I must tell you a great piece of refinement in Harley. He charged me to come and see him often; I told him I was loth to trouble him, in so much business as he had, and desired I might have leave to come at his levee; which he immediately refused, and said, 'That was no place for friends.'"

"Oct.

Digitized by Google

But the assistance of Swift was essential to the existence of the ministry, and ample confidence was the only terms on which it could be procured. That which might be called properly the Tory party, by whose influence the new ministers had obtained and now held their station, differed in many essential points of doctrine, both from Harley and St. John, in so far, at least, as the principles of the latter were then understood. Both these statesmen had been members of Godolphin's administration, from which they had seceded in 1708, yet, having once belonged to it, they could not be supposed at once to rush to the opposite extremes of passive obedience and divine hereditary right. Still they were under the necessity of availing themselves of the drift of popular opinion, as a boatman benefits by the current which bears him towards his haven, managing meanwhile by sail and oar, so to moderate and control its impulse, that it shall neither hurry him beyond the point proposed, nor dash him against the adjacent cliffs. Under such difficulties the talents of Swift, to mould and moderate the tone of public feeling, became of the last importance to the new rulers; and hence Harley laid aside his reserve, and St. John his levity, to vie in courtesy towards an author, whose principles in church and state had hitherto been those of moderation, and who combined the power of expressing and supporting his sentiments, in a manner at once forcible and adapted to the capacity of the public. Swift, on the other hand, beheld the triumph of the church establishment, and saw, with pleasure, that the affairs of state were to be

"Oct. 10.—Harley tells me he has shown my memorial to the queen, and seconded it very heartily; because, said he, the queen designs to signify it to the bishops of Ireland in form, and take notice that it was done upon a memorial from you; which he said he did to make it look more respectful to me. I believe never was any thing compassed so soon: and purely done by my personal credit with Mr. Harley; who is so excessively obliging, that I know not what to make of it, unless to show the rascals of the other party that they used a man unworthily who had deserved better. He speaks all the kind things to me in the world.—Oct. 14. I stand with the new people ten times better than ever I did with the old, and forty times more caressed."

Digitized by Google

conducted by men, whose tenets were ostensibly as favourable to liberty as his own. He saw, besides, an opportunity of wreaking his vengeance on those by whom he had been overlooked in the plenitude of their power; and, from the influence of those mixed motives, enlisted himself, with heart and hand, under the banners of the new ministers.

The first and most urgent point in which they required his assistance, was the conduct of the "Examiner," a periodical paper, which St. John himself, Prior, Dr. Freind, King, and other Tory writers, had already commenced as the organ of the new rulers. Thirteen numbers had been published, and the want of a regular and responsible editor was already visible. The thirteenth number was an avowed and violent defence of the doctrine of hereditary right, in its most absurd extent.* This was a subject on which they were willing to avoid committing themselves, and caution was the more necessary, as Addison had already, in a paper called the "Whig Examiner," assumed the task of replying to and exposing the arguments of their Coryphæus. But three weeks ere Swift entered the field of controversy, it was relinquished by his illustrious contemporary.† The moderate and gentle disposition of Addison was ill suited for the virulence of personal debate; and if he withdrew from it when he learned that Swift was about to take the field, it is neither an imputation on his talents nor his courage, that he should have avoided a contest at once doubtful, harassing, and invidious. It was the avowed purpose of this publication, "to censure the writings of others, and to give all persons a re-hearing, who had suffered under any unjust sentence of the Examiner," and during the

* This was No. XIII. of the original edition of the Examiners. But being omitted in the republication of that paper, the first number composed by Swift came to rank as No. XIII., which had originally been No. XIV.

† Dr. Johnson overlooked this circumstance when he represented the controversy as conducted between Swift and Addison personally. The last Whig Examiner is dated 12th October 1710, and No. XIII. of the Examiner, the first written by Swift, is dated 2d November, at the distance of about three weeks.

Digitized by Google

existence of the work, the task was accomplished with great energy and little mercy. Not only Sacheverell, but Prior, and St. John himself, were attacked, and severely satirized. The Whig Examiner was succeeded by the Medley, on the same side of the question, a periodical paper composed by Oldmixon, and revised by Mainwaring. The first number appeared 5th October 1710, and the last, being Number XLV., is dated 6th August 1711, during which period the authors maintained a constant warfare with the Examiners.* This last publication was conducted by Swift, from the 13th to the 45th and 46th Numbers, or from 10th November 1710, to 14th June 1711, a space of seven months, during which time, in the language of Homer, he bore the battle upon his single shield, and by the vigour of his attack, and dexterity of his defence, inspired his own party with courage, and terrified or discomfited those champions who stept from the enemy's ranks for the purpose of assailing him. Unrestrained by those considerations which probably influenced the gentler mind of Addison, he engaged in direct personal controversy, and, not satisfied with directing his artillery on the main body of the enemy, he singled out for his aim, particular and well-known individuals. Wharton, whose character laid him too open to such an attack, was the first of those victims; Sunderland, Godolphin, Cowper, Walpole, and Marlborough himself, became the butts of his satire; but he is least justifiable where it is exerted against Lord Somers, whose services to his country, independent of ancient friendship and undeniable virtues, ought to have silenced such reproaches as had no better foundation than private scandal.†

It was not, however, in the Examiner alone, that Swift manifested his zeal for Harley's administration: with a readiness and versatility almost inconceivable, he assumed every shape which could give courage to

* Oldmixon himself states, that the Medley was proposed by Mr. Mainwaring, and was written by that gentleman, Steele, Henley, Kennet, and himself, who had upon his hands the chief labour.—*History of England*, p. 456.

† See Examiner, No. 26. Swift's Works, Vol. III. p. 376.

Digitized by Google

his friends, and perplex or annoy their opponents. His ready talent for popular poetry was laid under liberal contribution; and Sid Hamet's Rod was succeeded by a variety of pamphlets and lampoons, composed or corrected by Swift, whose effect upon the public mind, while they had all the raciness of fresh and current personal satire, may be guessed by the amusement which they continue to afford the reader, when many innuendoes are lost, and others can only be understood through the labour of the commentator.† His resentment against Lord Wharton he again indulged, in the "Short Character" of that nobleman, with some account of his government. The character was drawn in the keenest strokes of satire; and it seems only to have grieved the writer, that the facts imputed to the lord-lieutenant, being rather morally flagitious than legally criminal, afforded no grounds for the impeachment with which Wharton had been threatened by the predominant Tories. He also published "Remarks upon a Letter to the seven Lords who examined Greg," a tract designed to vindicate Harley's character, whom the spirit of party endeavoured to implicate in a treasonable correspondence, which that person, a clerk in his office, had maintained with the public enemy.

While thus actively engaged in political controversy, Swift did not omit to solicit the cause for which he had been deputed from Ireland. The interest which he enjoyed with the new ministers, together with their wish to be considered as benefactors to the church, soon obtained for the Irish clergy the long-solicited grant of the first-fruits. But before this satisfactory result of Swift's mission was known in Ireland, the bishops (slow, it would seem, in political intelligence) had adopted an idea, that, from his former intimacy with the Whig party, he would be no agreeable intercessor with those now in power, and therefore recalled his commission, under the pretext of putting the whole affair into the hands of the Duke of Ormond. Swift was naturally offended and disgusted at being encountered

* See a list in the Appendix, No. IV.

Digitized by Google

with such a requital, at the very moment when he had achieved the object of his mission, and had a right to expect the thanks of the convocation. It is the subject of a correspondence with Archbishop King, in which that prelate makes some reluctant and awkward excuses for the treatment which Swift had received from his brethren. Indeed, all the letters which pass between these distinguished men, exhibit much more formality and respect, than real friendship and kindness.* And, finally, when Swift expected that the archbishop would propose some mode of requiting the services which the church owed him upon this occasion, he received a curious letter of advice, in which King recommends to him, (needlessly, surely,) first, to push his present interest with government into obtaining some preferment that might make him easy; and, secondly, after an oblique hint that his literary hours had been hitherto but idly employed, he advises his correspondent to look into Dr. Wilkin's "Heads of Matters," contained in his "Gift of Preaching," and thence select some serious and useful theological subject, and so to manage it as to be of use to the world. Swift considered this letter as a sort of covered insult; and replied to the first part, that though his interest was as great at court as ever belonged to one of his level, he would never solicit for himself, whatever he had done for others; to the sec-

* There are many indications of this want of cordiality. King attacks, with great vehemence, the short character of the Earl of Wharton, which he probably suspected to be Swift's. He appears to have regarded our author's character as too volatile, nor did he (though of high-church principles) heartily approve of Harley's administration. He was accused of maliciously applying a quotation from the story of Piso, in Tacitus, to the wound which Harley received from Guiscard. And although Swift, upon that occasion, stifled the report, and vindicated the archbishop, yet it appears from his journal, that he, in some degree, believed it. See his Works, Vol. XV. p. 431. While Swift also was anxious to press upon King the services which Harley, at Swift's intercession, had rendered the church, in the matter of the first-fruits, the archbishop endeavours to escape from his conclusion, and to transfer great part of the merit to the Duke of Ormond. Ibid. Vol. II. p. 331. Afterwards Swift had several debates with King on the subject of his jurisdiction over the deanery of St. Patrick's, and on other subjects. Ibid. Vol. XVII. p. 110.

Digitized by Google

ond, that to advise him to become useful to the church, by his writings, while his own fate was totally uncertain, was to ask a man floating at sea, what he meant to do when he came ashore. But, notwithstanding these petty feuds, the archbishop and Swift continued on terms of civility, and occasional correspondence, until the death of the prelate; and King is mentioned with high commendation in an "Essay on the use of Irish manufactures," and other treatises of the author.

Swift was now the constant friend and associate of Harley and St. John; the moderator in their disputes; the assistant of their counsels; the sharer and enlivener of their social moments,—and that upon a footing of freedom and independence usually unknown in such relations. He not only spurned at the proposal of pecuniary remuneration for his literary labours, but made the offer itself a cause of quarrel with Mr. Harley.* He even rejected the situation of chaplain, when offered to him by the same statesman.† And he assumed

* Feb. 6, 1710. "Mr. Harley desired me to dine with him again to-day, but I refused him; for I fell out with him yesterday, and will not see him again till he makes me amends."

Feb. 7. "I was this morning early with Mr. Lewis of the secretary's office, and saw a letter Mr. Harley had sent him, desiring to be reconciled; but I was deaf to all entreaties, and have desired Lewis to go to him, and let him know that I expected further satisfaction. If we let these great ministers pretend too much, there will be no governing them. He promises to make me easy, if I would but come and see him; but I won't, and he shall do it by message, or I will cast him off. I will tell you the cause of our quarrel when I see you, and refer it to yourselves. In that he did something, which he intended for a favour, and I have taken it quite otherwise, disliking both the thing and the manner, and it has heartily vexed me; and all I have said is truth, though it looks like jest: and I absolutely refused to submit to his intended favour, and expect further satisfaction."

In a subsequent part of the Journal he acquaints Stella with the cause of quarrel, which was the offer of a bank note of fifty pounds.

† "My Lord Oxford, —— by a second hand, proposed my being his chaplain, which I, by a second hand, excused. I will be no man's chaplain alive." Works, Vol. II. p. 276. And he elsewhere declares his reason for refusing was, that it did not become him to engage in a state of dependence. Vol. V. p. 15.

JOURNAL TO STELLA, April 1, 1711. "I dined with the secretary, who seemed terribly down and melancholy; which Mr. Prior and Lewis observed as well as I: perhaps something is gone wrong; perhaps there is nothing in it."

Digitized by Google

and maintained the right of an independent friend, to take umbrage at the slightest shadow of caprice in those to whom he was so ardently attached. Indeed, it was probably the exercise of this intimacy, and the display of power which it implied, which were the chief gratifications received by Swift, from the high situation which he occupied during this administration; for a contempt of rank, and a marked neglect of the ceremonials it requires, were carried by him to the verge of affectation. This was doubtless an error, and one which leaves room to suspect, that the advantages which he studiously undervalued, held, in truth, more than their just proportion in his estimate. The whim of publicly sending the prime-minister into the House of Commons to call out the first secretary of state, only to let him know that he would not dine with him if he dined late; the insisting that a duke should make him the first visit, merely because he was a duke;—these, and other capricious exertions of despotic authority over the usual customs of society, are unworthy of Swift's good sense and penetration. In a free country, the barriers of etiquette between the ranks of society are but frail and low, the regular gate is open, and the tax of admittance a trifle; and he who, out of mere wantonness, over-

April 3. "I called at Mr. Secretary's to see what the d——nailed him on Sunday; I made him a very proper speech, told him I observed he was much out of temper; that I did not expect he would tell me the cause, but would be glad to see he was in better; and one thing I warned him of, never to appear cold to me, for I would not be treated like a school-boy; that I had felt too much of that in my life already, (meaning from Sir William Temple;) that I expected every great minister who honoured me with his acquaintance, if he heard or saw any thing to my disadvantage, would let me know in plain words, and not put me in pain to guess by the change or coldness of his countenance or behaviour; for it was what I would hardly bear from a crowned head; and I thought no subject's favour was worth it; and that I designed to let my lord keeper and Mr. Harley know the same thing, that they might use me accordingly. He took all right; said I had reason; vowed nothing ailed him, but sitting up whole nights at business, and one night at drinking; would have had me dine with him and Mrs. Masham's brother, to make up matters; but I would not: I don't know, but I would not. But indeed I was engaged with my old friend Rollinson; you never heard of him before."

Digitized by Google

leaps the fence, may be justly supposed not to have attained the philosophical indifference to the circumstance of being born in the excluded district. The conduct of Swift, in this particular, did not escape the satirists of the opposite party,* who scrutinized, with a jealous and

* Among these is the author of a rare tract, who, in the preface, thus enlarges upon Swift's habit of reversing the usual ceremonials of society, and gives, probably, no inaccurate account of his levee: —"Charging Patrick, his footman, never to present any service; giving notice that all petitions be delivered to him on the knee; sitting to receive them like a triton in a scene of wreck, where, at one view, according to Patrick's fancy in disposing of them, you might have seen half shirts and shams, rowlers, decayed night-gowns, snuff swimming upon gruel, and bottles with candles stuck in them, ballads to be sung in the street, and speeches to be made from the throne; making rules of his own to distinguish his company, which showed that he was greater than any of them himself. For, if a lord in place came to his levee, he would say, 'Prithy, lord, take away that damn'd chamber pot, and sit down.' But, if it were a commoner only, or an Irish lord, he would remove the implement himself, and perhaps ask pardon for the disorder of the room, swearing that he would send Patrick to the devil, if the dog did not seem to be willing to go to him of himself.

"'Twas after the invention of this art that he had the quarrel with the ambassador about place, and that he quitted the quarrel (as one would have thought) to discourse upon the virtue of new-laid eggs.

"A new-laid egg is better for the stomach than dates, or Daffy's elixir, or saffron: 'tis a very fit diet to be used in drawing up a manifesto; 'tis as good as opium in causing pleasant dreams; Lord Bacon saith it nourisheth as it passes the oesophagor; and Pythagoras proposed it might be worshipped as a god. In the end, after many flights of this kind, he concluded with a bitter and hearty curse upon all the various and different species of weasels.

"About a year and a month after this, he was heard to make some self-denying promises in prayer, that, for the time to come, he would stint himself to two or three bottles in an evening; that he would keep himself clean, changing his shirt often, as other good men do; that he would never play at ombre, or make songs again upon a Sunday, if his prayers were immediately granted. But, on the other hand, he threatened, that, if ever there were any delay made in it, he would never pray again as long as he lived. No! he vowed to God that he would not.

"It is not known what it was that he desired, nor can there be any conjecture made of it. But this has been taken notice of, that within some time after he left the town, and that he has not been heard of since."

Preface to "A Treatise upon the Modes, or a Farewell to French Kicks. London, 1715.'

Digitized by Google

unfriendly eye, both his life, habits, and manners. The most curious of these specimens of dislike and apprehension, occurs in the diary of Bishop Kennet, a zealous Whig, who, in the state and patronage assumed by Swift, as well as in his favour for the poetry of *one Mr. Pope, a Papist*, saw little else than the speedy introduction of Popery and the Pretender. The picture is powerfully drawn, though with a coarse and invidious pencil:—"1713. Dr. Swift came into the coffeehouse, and had a bow from every body but me. When I came to the antichamber to wait before prayers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and business, and acted as a master of requests. He was soliciting the Earl of Arran to speak to his brother the Duke of Ormond, to get a chaplain's place established in the garrison of Hull, for Mr. Fiddes, a clergyman in that neighbourhood, who had lately been in jail, and published sermons to pay fees. He was promising Mr. Thorold to undertake with my lord-treasurer, that, according to his petition, he should obtain a salary of £200 *per annum*, as minister of the English church at Rotterdam. He stopped F. Gwynne, Esq., going in with the red bag to the Queen, and told him aloud he had something to say to him from my lord-treasurer. He talked with the son of Dr. Davenant to be sent abroad, and took out his pocket-book and wrote down several things, as *memoranda*, to do for him. He turned to the fire, and took out his gold watch, and telling him the time of the day, complained it was very late. A gentleman said, 'he was too fast.'—'How can I help it,' says the doctor, 'if the courtiers give me a watch that won't go right?' Then he instructed a young nobleman, that the best poet in England was Mr. Pope, (a Papist,) who had begun a translation of Homer into English verse, for which 'he must have them all subscribe; for,' says he, 'the author *shall not* begin to print till *I have* a thousand guineas for him.' Lord-treasurer, after leaving the queen, came through the room, beckoning Dr. Swift to follow him: both went off just before prayers."

"Nov. 3.—I see and hear a great deal to confirm a doubt, that the Pretender's interest is much at the bot-

Digitized by Google

tom of some hearts: a whisper that Mr. Nelson had a prime hand in the late book for hereditary right; and that one of them was presented to majesty itself, whom God preserve from the effect of such principles and such intrigues!"

It has been suggested by Swift's noble biographer, that this humour of predominating over those whose rank was superior to his own, impeded his rise in the church, and even limited his intercourse with the administration of 1710, to a seeming rather than a real confidence. "His spirit," says Lord Orrery, "for I would give it the softest name, was ever untractable. The motions of his genius were often irregular. He assumed more the air of a patron than of a friend. He affected rather to dictate than advise." This is the language of one who felt that the adventitious distinctions of rank sunk before the genius of Swift; and who, though submitting to the degradation during the Dean's life, in order to enjoy the honour of calling himself his friend, was not unwilling, after the death of that friend, to indemnify himself for the humiliation which he had sustained in the course of their intercourse. The following passage, when it is considered, that Swift, of whom it treats, was one of the most keen and penetrating of mankind, jealous even to punctilio of frank and cordial reciprocity of confidence in the friendships which he formed with the great, appears yet more fantastical and groundless. "He was elated with the appearance of enjoying ministerial confidence. He enjoyed the shadow, the substance was detained from him. He was employed, not trusted; and at the same time he imagined himself a subtile diver, who dexterously shot down into the profoundest regions of politics; he was suffered only to sound the shallows nearest the shore, and was scarce admitted to descend below the froth at the top. Perhaps the deeper bottoms were too muddy for his inspection."* It had been kind of his lordship, in elucidation of this metaphorical tirade, to have given us some glimpse into those profound regions

* Orrery's Remarks on the Life of Swift, 1758. p. 30.

Digitized by Google

of state policy, which the sagacity of Swift did not enable him to fathom. Without such light we can only attach one interpretation to these expressions, namely, that the ministry of Queen Anne had determined upon the restoration of the line of Stuart, as the ultimate purpose of their government. In this supposed case, certainly Swift was not of their counsel. But if a scheme so desperate was ever meditated, it could be by St. John alone, when, placing himself at the head of the violent Tory and Jacobite party, he broke off all friendship with Harley; and such a plan could only have been formed after Swift had retired to Letcombe, where there was no opportunity of entrusting it to him, if, indeed, his acquiescence could have been expected, in a project so contrary to his well-known principles. As for the other depths of state policy, pure or muddy, deep or shallow, which were sounded by Queen Anne's last ministry, they are now well known to history; and a short deduction of Swift's labours in the cause of that government, will plainly show how intimately they were then known to him.

The first and most pressing danger of the new ministers, arose from the difficulty they experienced in restraining the impetuosity of the Tory party, who had, indeed, borne them into power, but who watched, with an eye of doubt and jealousy, ministers whom their superior talents for public business, rather than ardent party zeal, had recommended to the situations they held. Hence a schism arose among the majority of the House of Commons, and a numerous body of country members, under the title of the October Club, formed themselves into an association for controlling the government and hurrying matters to extremity against the obnoxious members of the opposite party. The talents of Swift were employed to appease a discontent which was hastily ripening into mutiny, and his "Advice humbly offered to the members of the October Club," had the desired effect of softening some, and convincing others, until the whole body of malcontents were first divided and finally dissolved. The treatise is a masterpiece of Swift's political skill, judiciously palliating

Digitized by Google

these ministerial errors which could not be denied, and artfully intimating those excuses, which, resting upon the disposition of Queen Anne herself, could not, in policy or decency, be openly pleaded. Such were his services during this first crisis in the new administration. But another still more perilous was rapidly approaching.

The very existence of Harley's administration rested upon the possibility of making peace with France; and as such necessity was but too obvious to that wily nation, she seized the opportunity of endeavouring to regain by negotiation, what she had lost by the victorious arms of Marlborough. The mind of the public, therefore, was to be prepared, not for such a peace as might have justly been expected to conclude a war of distinguished success; but for such terms as France might be induced to grant from the dread of over-playing her own game, and so becoming the means of destroying the very administration on whose continuance the prospect of peace depended. For this purpose, Prior was despatched to Paris, and Swift undertook to pave the way for peace, by representing that England was the dupe of her allies, and bore almost the whole burden of the war, of which they reaped the exclusive advantage. A light and humorous pamphlet, professing to give an account of Prior's journey, but in truth a mere fiction from beginning to end, was first published to amuse the credulous, and perhaps gradually to reconcile the public mind to the possibility of a peace with France. But the design was more gravely prosecuted in the celebrated treatise upon the "Conduct of the Allies," and in the "Remarks upon the Barrier Treaty." The reasoning in these pieces was most judiciously adapted to the prejudices of the English people. Neither the pride nor the good sense of the nation would have endured any arguments drawn from the uncertain fortunes of war, or from the state of the present campaign. But they listened with greedy ear to reasoning which assured them that the triumphs of English valour brought only honour to the country, while the Whig ministry at home exhausted the finances of Britain, and the Dutch and Germans

Digitized by Google

abroad, by a train of gross encroachment and imposition, broke every article of the treaty, and treated England with insolence and contempt, at the very time she was gaining towns, provinces, and kingdoms for them, at the price of her own ruin, and without the slightest prospect of national interest. The treatise on the Conduct of the Allies, appeared on the 27th November 1711, while the question of peace and war was depending before Parliament. Four editions were devoured by the public in the space of a week, and perhaps no production of the kind ever produced so strong an effect upon general opinion. It was the text-book from which the ministerial members in the House of Commons quoted their facts, and drew their arguments; while the Whigs, on the contrary, threatened to bring the author to the bar of the House of Lords, where, by the junction of Lord Nottingham, that party had acquired a temporary superiority. But Swift did not upon this occasion gain the painful distinction of proscription, to which he was afterwards repeatedly subjected. While Walpole and Aislabie harangued against him, the ministers employed the pen which they had found so forcible, in drawing up the celebrated Representation of the House of Commons on the State of the Nation, and the subsequent Address of Thanks to the Queen, two state-papers of the utmost importance.

While thus extending and confirming his interest with the party which was in power, it followed, almost necessarily, that Swift became gradually estranged from those friends with whom he had formerly been familiar. The coldness which arose between him and Addison, may be traced from passages in the Journal, and seems to have commenced on the part of the latter. Indeed, when politics occasion dissension between two men of generous spirit, he who is opposed to the party in power is for that single reason the most ready to take offence. Swift had used every effort consistent with the line of political conduct which he had adopted, to propitiate his friends of the Whig party. Congreve, Rowe, and Philips, experienced in their turn the benefits of his intercession, and it appears that he was really anxious

Digitized by Google

to have been of service to Steele. Against this ardent and ready writer the ministers entertained a deep antipathy. He had published in his Tatler a very poignant satire against the new administration, [written by Henley,] in which, under the allegory of a change of management at a theatre, Harley is represented as a deep intriguer, who had worked himself into the direction of the stage, to the extirpation of the good old British actors, and the introduction of foreign pretenders. This and similar attacks upon government, occasioned Steele being deprived of his office of Gazetteer. It is stated by Swift, and I have found it no where contradicted, that he interceded with ministers at this crisis in behalf of Steele, who, through his intercession, was permitted to retain his other post of commissioner of stamp-duties. So far, therefore, the balance of obligation was against Steele. But, as usually happens in such cases, that author's warm interference in politics drew upon him personal abuse in several papers of the Examiner, which was then the official organ of the ministerial party. These Steele seems to have imputed, in part at least, to the influence of his alienated friend; and in the Guardian, No. 53, he alludes to Swift with assumed contempt, and classes him as a reputed author of the Examiner along with Mrs. Manley, of whose character, in the same sentence, he pronounces the infamy: Swift adds, that he charged him with infidelity, but the passage was afterwards softened or omitted. This was the first open blow,—a blow for which no occasion was given, unless we suppose, with the annotator on the Tatlers, that Swift, although not at that time the editor of the Examiners, either countenanced or failed to expunge those personal reflections of which Steele complained. Swift, who appears keenly to have felt the insult, wrote a letter of exculpation to Addison, in which he disclaimed all concern with the Examiner; declared himself a stranger to the author, and charged Steele with injustice and ingratitude in attacking, without any previous request of explanation, a friend, at whose entreaty and intercession he had been suffered to retain his office. This produced a petulant reply from Steele,

Digitized by Google

in which he told Swift that the ministers "laughed at him," if they made him believe they had kept Steele in his office at his intercession; that if Swift had ever spoken in his favour, he was glad he had treated him with respect, although he still believed he was an accomplice of the Examiner; and he accuses Swift of duplicity and evasion, in his mode of denying that connexion. To this Swift returned a very angry vindication, in which he alleged, that, through his interest, the lord-treasurer had appointed a meeting with Steele, without requiring him to sacrifice any friend or principle, but that Steele had broken his appointment; and he adds, that he himself had not the least hand in writing any of the Examiners; had never exchanged a syllable with the supposed author (Oldisworth) in his life, nor ever seen him above twice, and that in mixed company.* Under this explanation, the blame of the open breach must remain with Steele, who, excited by a groundless suspicion, attacked in public the friend who had struggled in private to protect his interests, and that without soliciting either amicable explanation or apology. Modern editors have indeed doubted, with Steele, the truth of Swift's assertions, of his being totally unconnected with the Examiner; and an attempt has been made to glean evidence to the contrary, from his Journal to Stella, in which he mentions, upon different occasions, correcting the pieces of inferior agents, and conducting in secret the subordinate paper warfare which was maintained between the parties. But the admittance of such reasoning would make Swift as justly liable for the whole scurrility, without exception, (and it was no small quantity,) with which the Tory pamphleteers of the time bespattered the opposite party. Besides, if the Journal be taken for evidence, it will appear from that authority, that the Examiners were not

* This is confirmed by what he tells Stella, whom he was under no temptation to deceive:—"He (Oldisworth) is an ingenious fellow, but the most confounded vain coxcomb in the world, so that I dare not let him see me, nor am acquainted with him."—This was on the 12th March 1712-13, just before his breach with Steele.—See his Works, Vol. III. p. 123.

Digitized by Google

under Swift's control, for he regrets not being able to soften the reflections which they cast upon Marlborough.* A suspicion, therefore, of so vague a nature, furnishes no ground for disputing the solemn averment of Swift himself, who, as he lay under no obligation to Steele, was not surely under temptation to pledge himself unnecessarily to a direct and positive falsehood. That he interceded for Steele is certain; and why he should be suspected of privately injuring by libels the man whom he had endeavoured to serve, will require both proof and explanation, ere it can be recorded to the prejudice of Swift's character. It is, however, deeply to be regretted, that, in their subsequent controversy, Swift should have so totally forgotten their former friendship in their present animosity.

Meantime, if, in one instance, a friend had misconstrued his attempts to serve him, he was successful in the acquisition of others, who united with him in their sentiments on public affairs. The formation of the Society of Brothers, consisting of men of the first rank and most eminent talents among the Tories, who agreed to call themselves by the fraternal title, was accomplished under his auspices. It was by their assistance, that, in the midst of political faction, and during much business, more or less dependent upon his personal labour, Swift meditated a task so gigantic as to limit and fix the English tongue by a general standard, to be ascertained by a society resembling the French Academy. The antiquities of our language had been no part of Swift's study; and he obviously shows an ignorance of the leading fact, that the present speech of England did not, properly speaking, exist as a language until about the time of Edward III., when mutual convenience had accomplished a compound betwixt the French, which was the exclusive dialect of the nobles, and the Saxon, which was spoken by the inferior orders. The golden period of our language he conceives to have been from the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth, until the breaking out of the civil war in 1642. Yet those who con-

* Swift's Works, Vol. II. p. 480.

Digitized by Google

sider, on the one hand, the comparative poverty of the English of that period, and on the other the quaint affectations which have since become obsolete, will see no better reason for fixing upon the age of Elizabeth, than on any which has succeeded it, as the most improved period of the English tongue. The subsequent enlargement of science has rendered a proportional addition to our vocabulary altogether indispensable; and phrases at first introduced as the language of philosophy, are aptly and properly employed in oblique and metaphorical senses, until they become a part of our ordinary speech. And this gradual progress of improvement, of enlargement at least, must continue to influence our language, until the pitch of national improvement shall be attained and passed, and until authors, as well as the public, to whom they address themselves, shall look back unanimously toward the compositions of some particular period, as what must ever be the objects of their imitation, but never of their successful rivalry. An era like this seems to have taken place, both in Spain and Italy, where the necessity of composing in the same language, and upon the same plan which was used by their ancestors, has indeed fixed the dialect, but has, at the same time, neutralized the genius of those writers by whom it is to be employed. The utility, therefore, of a society whose statutes should fix down the present generation to use the very language, which, under different circumstances, and when knowledge was less generally diffused, was used by their forefathers, may be greatly questioned. Of the practicability of the scheme, Dr. Johnson has justly observed, that every man would have been willing, and many would have been proud, to disobey the decrees of the proposed academy, and that the institution being renewed by successive elections, would, in a short time, have differed from itself. There is but one mode in which the man of literature can contribute to the purity and stability of language, and in this the success of Swift himself has been at least equal to all that might have been expected from his projected institution. This can only be by such careful selection of words, and sedulous at-

Digitized by Google

tention to style, as may attract at once the approbation of his contemporaries, and become the object of imitation to his successors. It is upon the permanent popularity of an author alone, that his influence upon the speech of succeeding ages can be founded; and when that popularity rests upon the sure basis of literary merit, his language will remain current and intelligible, not only from its own purity, but because it is used in writings with which it would be a disgrace not to be intimately acquainted.

Swift's letter to the lord-treasurer upon this subject was published in May 1712, and the reception it met with might have convinced the author for what a refractory class of subjects he was proposing a legislation and constitution. Various answers were published to his proposal, all tending to impugn the authority of the institution, ere it was yet embodied, and several intimating, with the usual candour of disputants, that the chief purpose of the author was to create for himself an office of power and of profit;* for such is the alchemy of faction, whether literary or political, that it can extract scandal out of circumstances the most innocent or laudable. Meanwhile the lord-treasurer, according to his wonted custom, gave fair promises, but nothing more: and thus fell to the ground a proposal in which, as in many other cases, an inadequate remedy is proposed for

* At the end of the 25th Medley, 26th May 1712, appeared the following singular notice:—"In a few days will be published an improvement of the Reverend Dr. Jonathan Swift's late Proposal to the Most Honourable the Lord High Treasurer, for correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English tongue; wherein, beside abundance of other particulars, will be more clearly shown, that, to erect an academy of such men, who, (by being no Christians,) have unhappily prevented their ecclesiastical preferment; or, (by being buffoons and scandal-bearers,) can never expect the employment of an envoy from those who prefer such services at home, to the doing them no service abroad; and that to give them good pensions, is the true and only method towards the end proposed, in a letter to a gentleman, who mistook the doctor's project." And, in the succeeding Medley, was this advertisement: "Whereas, since my last, there has been published a very ingenious pamphlet, entitled, Reasons for not correcting, &c. which was advertised in my paper of Monday last, and was intended to be published the Monday following."

Digitized by Google

an evil, which, if indeed it be a real one, is inherent in the progressive state of society. There is every reason to think, that Swift was deeply interested in the success of his scheme; and it is probable that a small vocabulary, entitled, "An Explanation of difficult English words," may have been compiled by him on this occasion. The manuscript is imperfect, and of little value, unless in point of curiosity.*

The Letter on the English Language is the only purely literary publication which Swift had leisure to produce during this bustling period; for the republication of the Miscellanies, which took place in 1711, contains nothing new. They were published for John Morphew, without Swift's name, and apparently without his knowledge, but in a respectable form, and with a preface, indicating the author, and apologizing for the liberty of giving these pieces to the world without his

* It was found among Dr. Lyons' manuscripts, and is now before the editor. It seems to have occupied some time and attention, as it is alphabetically arranged, and additions occur from space to space upon the blank pages. It is, however, obvious, as in the notes upon Milton, either that the Dean had a mean opinion of those to whom the vocabulary was addressed, or else that words derived from the Latin had been in very rare use at that period. A few examples, taken at random, will make this evident.

A.

Abbreviation, a shortening.
Abbett, to stand by, to defend.
Abrogate, to disannul, make void, cancel.
Accession, a coming or arriving to.
Accumulate, to heap up, &c.

B.

Bacchanals, drunken feasts of Bacchus.
Baleful, dismal.
Ballot, the balls that votes are given by in Venice.
Battalia, order of battle, &c.

C.

Cabal, a private club or company.
Cadence, the tone, or accent, or sound.
Cajole, to flatter, wheedle, &c. &c.

The vocabulary, so far as preserved, only reaches letter N, and may contain from a thousand to fifteen hundred words.

Digitized by Google

consent. We have seen that Swift himself designed such a publication, but he had probably given up his purpose when he found himself engaged in writing political tracts, which would arrange but indifferently with "The Contests in Athens and Rome." He disowns Morphew's Miscellanies in his journal, yet expresses his doubts that Tooke, with whom he had corresponded on the subject of such a publication, was at the bottom of the undertaking. There may still be some room to believe, considering his habitual and mysterious circumspection on these occasions, that the book was not absolutely a piracy.

We cannot account the history of the peace of Utrecht, which was undertaken by Swift about this time, a purely literary composition. The ministers, who had designed to lay the foundation of their power in that treaty, soon saw themselves assailed from the vantage-ground which it afforded to the opposition. Swift, whose popular arguments had reconciled the people to the prospect of a peace, was now required to conciliate their good opinion of its conditions. His work, afterwards enlarged into a history of the four last years of Queen Anne's reign, was accordingly commenced, and, from various passages in his journal, appears to have occupied much of his time about this period. But Oxford and Bolingbroke, who now quarrelled upon every occasion, could not agree upon the light in which particular incidents were to be represented, and the publication was postponed against the opinion of the author, who conceived it might have been of considerable service to the ministerial cause.*

If Swift was himself interrupted in the career of general literature, no part of his character is more admirable than his zeal in assisting and bringing forward all who seemed to cultivate its arts with success. He relieved the necessitous, he supported the dependent, and insisted that more distinguished genius should re-

* In his letter to Miss Vanhomrigh, 8th July 1713, he says, "I verily think if the thing you know of had been published just upon the peace, the ministry might have avoided what has since happened." Vol. XIX. p. 334.

Digitized by Google

ceive from his powerful friends, that kindness and distinction to which it is so well entitled. Congreve, a Whig in politics, and who apprehended being deprived of his office under government, was treated by Harley, at Swift's request, with such marked regard and assurance of protection, as excited his astonishment, while it allayed his apprehensions.* "And thus" says Swift, with the complacence of conscious virtue, "I have made a worthy man easy, and that's a good day's work."† He obtained also for the amiable Parnell, that prompt attention which is most flattering to the modesty of merit. At court, he contrived that the lord-treasurer should make the first advances to the man of letters, and thus, as he boasts to Stella, made the minister desire to be acquainted with Parnell, not Parnell with the minister.‡ Pope, who was now labouring on his Homer, experienced that warm and effectual support

* Journal to Stella, 22d June 1711, Works, Vol. II. p. 291.

† Of this, among many others, take the following instances: Journal, Feb. 12, 1712. "I dined to-day with our society, the greatest dinner I have ever seen. It was at Jack Hill's, the Governor of Dunkirk. I gave an account of sixty guineas I had collected, and am to give them away to two authors to-morrow. And lord-treasurer has promised me one hundred pounds to reward some others." —13th. "I was to see a poor poet, one Mr. Diaper, in a nasty garret, very sick. I gave him twenty guineas from Lord Bolingbroke, and disposed the other sixty to two other authors."—In that of March 30th, "I was naming some time ago, to a certain person, another certain person, that was very deserving, and poor, and sickly; and the other, that first certain person, gave me one hundred pounds to give the other. The person who is to have it never saw the giver, nor expects one farthing, nor has the least knowledge or imagination of it; so I believe it will be a very agreeable surprise; for I think it a handsome present enough. I paid the 100*l.* this evening, and it was a great surprise to the receiver."

‡ Journal to Stella, 31st January 1712–13. "I contrived it so that lord-treasurer came to me, and asked, (I had Parnell by me,) whether that was Dr. Parnell, and spoke to him with great kindness." Swift's Works, Vol. III. p. 106. Dr. Delany has given the anecdote too high a colouring, and certainly injured the grace of the compliment, by supposing that Swift made Lord Oxford, "in the height of his glory, walk with his treasurer's staff from room to room through his own levee, enquiring which was Dr. Parnell." *Observations on Orrery's Remarks*, p. 28. The attention was in the real case simple and delicate; in the other it would have been affected and ostentatious.

Digitized by Google

which is acknowledged in the preface to the Iliad;* and the foundation was laid of the memorable friendship, which lasted until the conclusion of their lives. It was by Swift's interest that Gay was made known to Lord Bolingbroke, and obtained his patronage. Arbuthnot, although he needed not our author's recommendation, having established himself by his professional merit, enjoyed in the most intimate degree the pleasure and advantage which were afforded by his society. Berkeley, afterwards the celebrated Bishop of Cloyne, owed to Swift those introductions which placed him in the way of promotion. "This, I think," said Swift upon that occasion, "I am bound to, in honour and conscience, to use all my little credit towards helping forward men of worth in the world."† In like manner, he recommended Rowe to a post under government; and although Prior, with whom he lived in strict intimacy, had no occasion for his services during the reign in which he flourished as a political character of eminence, yet, in that which followed, he received, during his distresses, the most effectual support from Swift's experienced friendship. With such literary friends and associates, Swift might well despise the abuse of Dennis, Oldmixon, and Smedley, endure the enmity of Steele, and even the estrangement of Addison.‡ His attention was kindly and willingly extended,

* See p. 93.

† Journal, 12th April 1713. Swift's Works, Vol. III. p. 152.

‡ The coldness between those great characters, seems to have commenced on Steele's account. 22d October 1710, Swift expressed his wishes to Addison to mediate with the ministers in Steele's favour, but his offer was dryly received. See Works, Vol. II. p. 57. On the 14th December, (Ibid. p. 112.) the breach seems to have grown wider, for Swift observes, "Mr. Addison and I are different as black and white, and I believe our friendship will go off by this damned business of party. He cannot bear seeing me fall in so with the ministry; but I love him still as much as ever, though we seldom meet." And again on the following day, (p. 114.) he blames Addison as having been the means of preventing Steele's accommodation with the ministry. And shortly after the estrangement, for it cannot be termed a quarrel, reached its highest point, "I called at the coffeehouse, where I had not been in a week, and talked coldly awhile with Mr. Addison; all our friendship and dearness are off: we are civil acquaintance, talk words of course, of when

Digitized by Google

even where literary merit was less remarkable. Dr. King, notwithstanding his having been Swift's personal antagonist,* was made Gazetteer through his influence. Diaper and others were relieved under the pressure of poverty; and Harrison was placed in a situation to have advanced his fortune, had life been spared to him. The early death of this young man, who had been recommended to Swift by Addison, was bewailed by his patron in terms which, from their plain and affecting simplicity, show how deeply he was interested in those whom he honoured by his protection.†

The benefit of Swift's protection was not limited to literary characters. All his friends, and even the friends of those friends, who had occasion for his good offices, Bernage, Beaumont, and many others, had the benefit of his intercession. He made the fortune of Barber the printer, who became afterwards lord mayor of London, and a man of great wealth. He recommended Dr. Freind to be physician-general in the army in Spain. In short, he laid the basis of that list of upwards of forty persons, including many of the highest respectability, both in point of fortune and talents, whom he had a right afterwards to consider as his debtors, and, according to their conduct towards him, to distinguish into the classes of grateful, ungrateful, and dubious. In short, as he expresses it in his Journal to Stella, he found himself able to forward the interest of every one, excepting only his own.

we shall meet, and that's all. Is it not odd? but I think he has used me ill, and I have used him too well, at least his friend Steele." Addison and Swift, however, continued to meet occasionally, notwithstanding their difference, and a foundation was luckily left for the reconciliation which afterwards took place between them.

* See p. 58, and Swift's Works, Vol. X. p. 23.

† "14th. I took Parnell this morning, and we walked to see poor Harrison. I had the hundred pounds in my pocket. *I told Parnell I was afraid to knock at the door; my mind misgave me.* I did knock, and his man in tears told me his master was dead an hour before. Think what grief this is to me! I could not dine with lord-treasurer, nor anywhere else, but got a bit of meat towards the evening. No loss ever grieved me so much; poor creature! Pray God Almighty bless you. Adieu. I send this away to-night, and I am sorry it must go while I am in so much grief."

Digitized by Google

While, indeed, Swift enjoyed so ample a power over the fortune of others, his own, to the surprise of the public, and no doubt to his internal disappointment, remained entirely stationary. The ministers, who admitted him to their inmost confidence, and shared with him at once their hours of business and of relaxation, appeared to have forgotten, while disposing of numerous church preferments, that the chief pillar of their cause, so far as it depended upon influence over the public mind, was only an Irish vicar, with the aid of a very poor prebendary. Swift, who disdained to solicit the advancement which he considered as his due, seems to have imputed for a time the delay of its arrival to the habits of procrastination peculiar to Harley, and to the unwillingness of the ministry to raise him to such a dignified situation in the church, as might limit in its consequence his opportunities of affording them assistance in their politics. But when in their intimacy they called him Jonathan, and he retorted that he supposed they would leave him Jonathan as they found him, the expression indirectly implied expectation as well as reproach; nor did all the kindness and complacence of the lord-treasurer prevent Swift from expressing peevishness on the delay which occurred in making some honourable provision for his future life.*

* He expresses himself to Stella on his hopes of preferment at first with great caution. 16th January 1710-11. "It is the last sally I shall ever make, but I hope it will turn to some account. I have done more for these, and I think they are more honest than the last: however, I will not be disappointed. I would make M. D. and me easy, and I never desired more." See his Works, Vol. II. p. 145. 24th January. "My new friends are very kind, and I have promises enough, but I do not count upon them." Ibid. p. 160. May 23d, 1711. "To return without some mark of distinction, would look extremely little, and I would likewise gladly be somewhat richer than I am." Ibid. p. 471. From a passage, July 1st, 1711, it would seem Stella had grown impatient, had expressed regret at his journey, and considered him as ill used by ministers, for he says in their vindication, "I had no offers of any living. Lord Keeper told me some months ago, he would give me one when I pleased, but I told him I would not take any from him, and the secretary told me the other day, he had refused a very good one for me; but it was in a place he did not like, and I know nothing of getting any thing here, and if they would give me leave, I would come over just now." Ibid. p. 313.

Digitized by Google

But there was a lion in the path, and the ministers were deficient in the power necessary to do in Swift's favour what we must suppose they had sincerely at heart. The real obstacle was the prejudice entertained by Queen Anne against the warmest literary supporter of her administration. All princes are necessarily educated in ceremonials and formalities, and those of weaker minds seldom can stir beyond their magic circle. Queen Anne was of the latter description, and was hence led to consider a breach of decorum, or a departure from professional character and etiquette, as equivalent to a heinous offence against morals. Swift was now to experience the truth of Atterbury's prophecy, made while the author of the Tale of a Tub was yet unknown. "He hath reason to conceal himself because of the profane strokes in that piece, which would do his reputation and interest in the world more harm than his wit can do him good."* While the author was generally accounted a Whig, Sharpe, Archbishop of York, who was in many respects Queen Anne's spiritual counsellor, conceived he was at once discharging his conscience and serving the high church party, by painting the Tale of a Tub as a ridicule upon religion in general, and the writer as little better than an infidel, who at once had disgraced his sacred order by profligate levity, and sapped the foundations of revealed religion: a scoffer, in short, and a deist, altogether undeserving of church preferment. This was a mode of reasoning, which, besides that the first part of the charge was not actually void of truth, was otherwise exactly adapted to the capacity and temper of a princess, who alleged as one reason for changing her prime minister, that he had appeared before her in a tie-wig instead of a full bottom. The prejudice which Sharpe's representation excited, appears to have been deeply imprinted upon the queen's mind from the beginning of Harley's administration. For although the lord-treasurer proposed as a natural consequence of Swift's high favour with the ministers that he should be presented

* Letter to Bishop Trelawney.

Digitized by Google

to the queen, yet the introduction was delayed, and at length laid aside, without any reason being assigned,* a circumstance which plainly implied, that the queen declined so far to grace the author of the Tale of a Tub. But if the reasoning or importunity of the ministers could have overcome the scruples of the queen in this particular, Swift's imprudent zeal in their behalf, had roused against him a more formidable enemy than the Archbishop of York, and passions much more irritable and vindictive than mere zeal for clerical decorum. Queen Anne, jealous of again being subjected to the domination of a single favourite, which had been so severely exercised by the Dutchess of Marlborough, now divided her confidence betwixt Mrs. Masham, the patroness of the Tories, and the Dutchess of Somerset, who was inclined towards the opposite faction; and with the petty craft of a weak mind, amused herself by balancing the strength of the contending parties against each other, in order that both might be sensible of their dependence on her personal favour. Swift, although perfectly aware that such was the queen's line of policy, and that the rude shocks, which the ministers received in the House of Lords arose entirely from the influence of the Dutchess of Somerset, was rash enough to suppose that the evil could be remedied, by holding up the favourite, whose secret influence was so powerful, as an object of satirical contempt. With this view, and using the same medium of satire which had been successful in the case of the sapient Partridge, and of Merlin's prediction,† he wrote

* The ministers expressed a resolution that Swift should preach before the Queen, (See Swift's Works, Vol. II. p. 111,) and Harley mentioned his intention of introducing him. But neither of these incidents took place. January 1710-11. "Mr. Harley of late has said nothing of presenting me to the queen.—I was overseen when I mentioned it to you. He has such a weight of affairs on him, that he cannot mind all; but he talked of it three or four times to me, long before I dropt it to you."

It has, however, been said, that the Dean received from the queen the beautiful seal with an Apollo and Pegasus. But this donation is extremely improbable, and the seal is mentioned in his will, as the gift of the Countess of Granville.

† Among the books in Swift's library, with notes in his own

Digitized by Google

the "Windsor Prophecy." In that satire the dutchess is ridiculed for the redness of her hair, and upbraided as having been privy to the murder of her first husband. It may be doubted which imputation she accounted the most cruel insult, especially since the first charge was undeniable, and the second only arose from the malice of the poet. The prophecy was printed and about to be published, but Mrs. Masham, more alive than the ministers to the danger of offending the queen, prevented this consummation of Swift's imprudence. The impression was nevertheless brought to the club of Brothers; and as each of the sixteen members took twelve copies, it was, to use a legal phrase, so complete an utterance, as altogether to defeat the purpose of Mrs. Masham's caution.* Having thus given mortal offence to a favourite, of whom he has himself recorded, that she had more personal credit than all the queen's servants put together; Swift was not long of feeling the effects of her resentment. He remained stationary, like a champion in a tale of knight-errantry, when, having surmounted all apparent difficulties, an invisible but irresistible force prevents him from the full accomplishment of the adventure. The promises of the ministers were

hand-writing, occurs a copy of Nostrodamus's true Prophecies, commented by Theoph. Garencieres, London, 1672. He probably consulted such works to catch the mystical and emblematical style of the ancient soothsayers.

* Journal to Stella, 24th December 1711. "My prophecy is printed, and will be published after Christmas day. I like it mightily; I don't know how it will pass. I believe every body will guess it to be mine, because it is somewhat in the same manner with that of Merlin, in the Miscellanies." 26th December. "I called at noon at Mrs. Masham's, who desired me not to let the Prophecy be published, for fear of angering the queen about the Dutchess of Somerset; so I wrote to the printer to stop them. They have been printed, and given about, but not sold." And a little lower, he says, "I entertained our society at the Thatched House tavern to-day at dinner; but brother Bathurst sent for wine, the house affording none. The printer had not received my letter, and so he brought us a dozen a-piece of the Prophecy; but I ordered him to part with no more. It is an admirable good one, and people are mad for it." From a letter to Mr. Tickell, written several years afterwards, Swift appears to have been fully aware of his imprudence, in suffering this piece to get abroad, and mentions it as a "thing which no friend would publish." See his Works, Vol. XIX. p. 299.

Digitized by Google

in the meanwhile reiterated, and doubtless with the sincere purpose of their fulfilment. An opportunity occurred of making them good, by appointing Swift to the see of Hereford, which became vacant by the death of Dr. Humphry Humphreys, on the 20th November 1712. There seems little doubt that the lord-treasurer recommended his friend to the vacant mitre; and a letter from Lord Bolingbroke, dated during the vacancy of the bishopric, certainly relates to the same proposal. It is warm, cordial, and friendly in the highest degree.* But the prejudice excited by the representations of the

* Thursday morning, two o'clock, January 5, 1712–13. "Though I have not seen, yet I did not fail to write to lord-treasurer. Non tua res agitur, dear Jonathan; it is the treasurer's cause; it is my cause; it is every man's cause who is embarked on our bottom. Depend upon it, that I never will neglect any opportunity of showing that true esteem, that sincere affection, and honest friendship for you, which fill the heart of your faithful friend, BOLINGBROKE." Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. page 23.

I conceive Hereford to have been the object in view for Swift, at this period, because the vacancy corresponds with the date of the above letter, and because it is twice mentioned by Swift, in his Journal, about the same period, 7th January 1712–13. "The Bishop of Ossory will not be Bishop of Hereford, to the great grief of himself and wife." 29th January. "Our English bishopric is not yet disposed of." Vol. III. p. 92, 100. Upon the whole, I have no doubt that at this time occurred the incidents mentioned by Mr. Sheridan. "The ministers, he states, had recommended Swift to the queen, to fill a vacant bishopric. But the Dutchess of Somerset, who entertained an implacable hatred against him, determined to move heaven and earth to prevent his promotion taking place. She first prevailed on the Archbishop of York to oppose it, whose remarkable expression to the queen was, "That her majesty should be sure that the man whom she was going to make a bishop was a Christian." But as he could give no better colour for this surmise, than that Swift was supposed to be the author of the "Tale of a Tub," the bishop was considered as acting officiously, out of too indiscreet a zeal, and his interposition was of no avail. The dutchess then went in person to the queen, and, throwing herself on her knees, entreated, with tears in her eyes, that she would not give the bishopric to Swift; at the same time presenting to her that excessively bitter copy of verses, which Swift had written against her, called, "The Windsor Prophecy." The queen, upon reading them, was stung with resentment at the very severe treatment which he had given to a lady, who was known to stand highly in her favour, and as a mark of her displeasure, passed Swift by, and bestowed the bishopric on another." The See of Hereford was given to Philip Bisse, translated from that of St. David's.

Digitized by Google

Archbishop of York, powerfully supported by the entreaties and tears of the Duchess of Somerset, prevailed against the united influence of ministers, who seldom united in any thing, and the name of Swift was added to the list of clergymen recommended to Queen Anne for promotion in the church, against whom she stated her objection, that they were too violent in party.

At length he began to feel that his situation was awkward, and became desirous either of receiving some preferment suited to the figure which he had made in public life, or of taking permission to retire to Ireland, at the risk of sacrificing all future hope of preferment, and encountering what he equally dreaded, the condolence of those who might affect to pity him.* After sundry insinuations that the lord-treasurer showed more personal kindness than attention to his interest, he at length expressed himself positively determined to relinquish labouring in the service of the ministers. "I will contract," he says, "no more enemies, at least I will not embitter worse than I have already, till I have got under shelter, and the ministers know my resolution."† At this time three Irish deaneries, a canonry of Windsor, and other church-livings in England, chanced to be vacant. On being informed that the warrant for the deaneries was filled up without mention of his name, Swift immediately announced his positive purpose of retiring, desiring Mr. Lewis to inform the lord-treasurer that he took nothing ill of him, but his failure to inform him, as he had promised to do, if he

* 4th March 1712–13. "Tisdal's a pretty fellow as you say; and when I come back to Ireland he will condole with me with abundance of secret pleasure. I believe I told you what he wrote to me, that 'I have saved England and he Ireland.' But I can bear that." Swift's Works, Vol. III. p. 125.

† 26th Dec. 1712. "I dined with lord-treasurer, who chid me for being absent three days. Mighty kind with a p—; less of civility, and more of interest." Swift's Works, Vol. III. p. 32. 25th Feb. 1712–13. "He chides me if I stay away but two days together. What will this come to? Nothing. My grandmother used to say,

More of your lining,
And less of your dining."

Vol. III. p. 120.

Digitized by Google

found the queen would do nothing for him; a remarkable passage, which shows that Swift was now fully sensible of the fatal influence which obscured his prospects of promotion. Thus pressed, Oxford, with the concurrence of the Duke of Ormond, then lord-lieutenant, proposed that Dr. Sterne should be removed to the Bishopric of Dromore, in order to vacate for Swift that Deanery of St. Patrick's, the name of which has since become a classical sound, because connected with his memory. Sterne had no apparent interest of his own, and was rather obnoxious to the Duke of Ormond. The circumstance, therefore, of his being promoted to the higher dignity, while Swift, with all his influence, only gained that from which Sterne was removed, indicates a capitulation between the queen and her ministers, in which the latter, finding their influence too low to obtain a mitre for their candidate, were contented to compound by procuring his appointment to a wealthy deanery. A last effort was made by the joint interest of Oxford and Lady Masham, to exchange St. Patrick's for a prebendary of Windsor. But the remonstrances of the prime minister, and the entreaties, even the tears of the favourite, were unavailing; and Swift, galled by the difficulty which attended his promotion, could only console his pride by the consideration, that a bishop had been created against great opposition, and without any interest of his own, in order to make way for his gaining the best deanery in Ireland. It is remarkable, that, neither during the agitating period when this business was in dependence, nor at any other time, did Swift suffer himself to glance a sarcasm at Queen Anne, or at her memory.* And this is the more striking, as he

* The following line can hardly be considered as an exception :—

——— By an old [murderess?] pursued,
A crazy prelate, and a *royal prude*.

In the same piece he mentions, in very different terms, the intrigues of Archbishop Sharpe and the Dutchess of Somerset :—

York is from Lambeth sent to tell the queen,
A dangerous treatise writ against the spleen;
Which by the style, the matter, and the drift,
'Tis thought could be the work of none but Swift.

Digitized by Google

seems to have lost patience with his friend Oxford, even while he was sensible he laboured all he could to overcome the prejudices against his character in the royal breast. This respectful moderation is a strong contrast to the offence which he afterwards expressed against Queen Caroline for much slighter neglect. But in the former case, Queen Anne's favour for the church, and for the ministers with whom Swift lived in such intimacy, seems to have subdued his resentment for her personal dislike.*

The warrant for the Deanery of St. Patrick's was signed 23d February, and Swift set out for Ireland early in June 1713, to take possession of a preferment, which he always professed to consider as at best an honourable exile. It must have been indeed unexpected, that his unexampled court favour should all terminate in his obtaining a deanery in a kingdom remote

> Poor York! the harmless tool of others' hate;
> He sues for pardon, and repents too late.
> Now angry Somerset her vengeance vows,
> On Swift's reproaches for her murder'd spouse:
> From her red locks her mouth with venom fills,
> And thence into the royal ear distils.

It is remarkable, that, in two passages of his Journal to Stella, Swift intimates that the Archbishop of York had expressed a strong wish to be reconciled to him; but it does not appear that they ever met. Delany, after expressing his surprise that Swift should ever have been represented as an infidel, mentions, as if it consisted with his own knowledge, "It will be some satisfaction to the reader, as I doubt not it was to Swift, (though no reparation of the injury,) to know that the archbishop lived to repent of this injury done to Swift, expressed great sorrow for it, and desired his forgiveness."—*Observations upon Lord Orrery's Remarks, &c.* p. 271.

* Bolingbroke always affirmed, that the queen had no unfavourable impression of Swift, and that he had been assured by herself, that neither the Archbishop of York, nor any one else, had prejudiced her against him. He represented the whole as an invention of Lord Oxford, to keep Swift to his deanery in Ireland. Dr. King shrewdly observes, "If Lord Bolingbroke had hated the Earl of Oxford less, I should have been readily inclined to believe him."—*King's Anecdotes*, p. 61. Indeed, no adequate reason can be assigned, why Oxford should have impeded the promotion of his most zealous friend and active partizan. Bolingbroke meant it to be inferred, perhaps, that Swift was likely to take his side and desert Oxford, when they came to an open rupture. But Swift's subsequent behaviour affords no room for such a belief.

Digitized by Google

from those statesmen who equally needed his assistance, and delighted in his society. Nor can we doubt that he was disappointed, as well as surprised, since at one time he held his services too essential to the administration, to allow them even to create him a bishop in Ireland.*

To the very last, he confesses he thought the ministry would not have parted with him, and could only conclude, that they had not the option of making a suitable provision for him in England.†

SECTION IV.

Swift takes possession of his Deanery—Is recalled to England to reconcile Harley and St. John—Increases in favour with Oxford—Engages again in Political controversy—Writes the Public Spirit of the Whigs—A reward offered for discovery of the Author—The dissensions of the Ministers increase—Swift retires to the Country—Writes Thoughts on the Present State of Affairs—Writes to Lord Oxford on his being Displaced—And retires to Ireland on the Queen's Death—His reception—His Society—The interest he displayed in the misfortunes of his Friends.

The biographers of Swift have differed in their account of Swift's reception as Dean of St. Patrick's.

* Journal, May 29, 1711. "We hear your Bishop Hickman is dead; but nobody here will do anything for me in Ireland, so they may die as fast or slow as they please." Swift's Works, Vol. II. p. 278. Hickman, Bishop of Derry, was succeeded by Dr. Hartstonge, translated from the See of Ossory.

† Journal, 18th April 1713. "Neither can I feel joy at passing my days in Ireland; and I confess I thought the ministry would not let me go; *but perhaps they cannot help it.*" Swift's Works, Vol. III. p. 155.

Digitized by Google

According to Lord Orrery, it was unfavourable in the extreme. He was shunned by the better class, hissed, hooted, and even pelted by the rabble. This is contradicted by Delany and Sheridan, who argue on the improbability of his experiencing such affronts, when the high-church interest, which he had so ardently served, was still in its zenith. Indeed, there is no doubt, that Lord Orrery's account is greatly exaggerated, or rather that his lordship has confounded the circumstances which attended Swift's first reception, with those of his final retirement to his deanery after the death of the queen. Yet, even on his first arrival, his reception was far from cordial. Many, even among his own order, beheld with envy the Vicar of Laracor elevated by mere force of talents to a degree of power and consequence seldom attained by the highest dignitaries of the church; and they scarce forgave him for his success, even in the very negotiation of which they reaped the benefit. "I remit them," says Swift, with indignant contempt, "their first fruits of ingratitude, as freely as I got the others remitted to them."* He had also more legitimate enemies. The violent Whigs detested him as an apostate from their party; the dissenters regarded his high-church principles with dread and aversion; and both had at that time considerable influence in the city of Dublin.†

* Swift's Works, Vol. II. p. 390.

† The following copy of verses occur in the Works of Jonathan Smedley, and are said to have been fixed on the door of St. Patrick' Cathedral on the day of Swift's instalment :—

To-day, this temple gets a Dean,
Of parts and fame uncommon;
Used both to pray, and to profane,
To serve both God and Mammon.

When Wharton reign'd, a Whig he was;
When Pembroke, that's dispute, sir;
In Oxford's time, what Oxford pleased,
Non-Con, or Jack, or Neuter.

This place he got by wit and rhyme
And many ways most odd;

Digitized by Google

The temper and manners of Swift were ill qualified to allay these prejudices. In assuming his new offices, with perhaps too much an air of authority, he soon provoked opposition from the Archbishop of Dublin, and from his own chapter; and he was thwarted and disappointed both in his arrangements with his predecessor, and in the personal promotions which he wished to carry through for his friends. Besides, he had returned to Ireland a dissatisfied, if not a disappointed man, neither hoping to give nor receive pleasure, and such unhappy expectations are usually the means of realizing themselves. His intimate friendship with Vanessa already embittered the pleasure of rejoining Stella; and it was therefore no wonder, that, after hurrying from Dublin to his retirement at Laracor, he should write to the former in the following strain of despondency.

"I staid but a fortnight in Dublin, very sick, and returned not one visit of a hundred that were made me;

And might a bishop be in time,
Did he believe in God.

For High-Church men and policy
He swears he prays most hearty;
But would pray back again, to be
A Dean of any party.

Four lessons, Dean, all in one day!
Faith! it is hard, that's certain:
'Twere better hear thy own Peter say,
G—d d—n thee, Jack and Martin.

Hard! to be plagued with Bible, still,
And prayer-book before thee;
Hadst thou not wit, to think, at will,
On some diverting story?

Look down, St. Patrick, look, we pray,
On thine own church and steeple;
Convert thy Dean on this great day,
Or else, God help the people!

And now, whene'er his Deanship dies,
Upon his tomb be 'graven;
A man of God here buried lies,
Who never thought of Heaven.

Digitized by Google

but all to the Dean, and none to the Doctor. I am riding here for life; and I think I am something better. I hate the thoughts of Dublin, and prefer a field-bed, and an earthen-floor, before the great house there, which they say is mine."—"At my first coming, I thought I should have died with discontent, and was horribly melancholy while they were installing me, but it begins to wear off, and change to dulness."* He writes Archbishop King in the same strain of discontented melancholy,† and it is still more strongly expressed in his verses, Vol. XII. p. 335.

While Swift was in a state of seclusion, so different from the bustling scene in which he had been for three years engaged, he received from the Tory administration the most anxious summons, pressing his instant return to England. Swift had early observed to Harley and St. John, that the success and stability of their government depended upon their mutual confidence and regard for each other. But this was soon endangered by a variety of minute grounds of mistrust, as well as by the differing genius of these two statesmen. Oxford was slow, mysterious, and irresolute; St. John vehement, active, and irregularly ambitious. The former was desirous of engrossing from his colleague, not only the essentials of ministerial power, but all its outward show and credit; the latter was ambitious of sharing the honours, as well as the fatigues, of public employment. These dissensions sometimes smouldered in secret, sometimes burst out into open flame; were frequently suppressed, but never extinguished. The disunion became visible to Swift, so early as within the first six months of their administration,‡ and in about

* The letter is dated Laracor, 8th July 1713. Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 334.

† "I can tell your grace nothing from Dublin. I was there between business and physic, and paid no visits, nor received any, but one day." Letter, 16th July 1713. Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 52.

‡ Journal, 27th April 1711. "I am heartily sorry to find my friend the secretary stand a little ticklish with the rest of the ministry; there have been one or two disobliging things that have happened. I will, if I meet Mr. St. John alone on Sunday, tell him my opinion, and beg him to set himself right, else the consequences

Digitized by Google

four months after it, it was apparent both to friends and enemies.* While the increase of this unkindness became more and more apparent, Swift, at the risk of compromising his own influence with both, though his fortune appeared dependent on its subsistence, hesitated not to undertake the precarious and thankless office of mediating between them. In verse and in prose, by conversation and writing, by serious advice and jocular remonstrance, he endeavoured to alarm his powerful friends upon the hazards into which they were hurried by their dissensions. He reminded the minister, in the verses entitled "Atlas," of the danger of attempting to conduct the whole government, without the confidential assistance of his colleagues; with St. John he frankly expostulated upon the absolute necessity of his acting cordially with the lord-treasurer; and he was so far successful, upon more than one occasion, as to bring about a seeming and temporary reconciliation.† But, ere he left England, the evil which he had twice patched up, as he expresses himself, with the hazard of all his credit, became more evident than ever; and he was scarce settled in Ireland, before a hundred letters from different quarters recalled him to resume the hopeless task of ineffectual mediation. He obeyed the call so hastily, that he did not even take leave of the Archbishop of Dublin, at which that prelate was so much offended, that he threatened to take measures for obliging Swift to reside at his deanery;‡ and it was probably his influence, aided by the envy of the inferior clergy, that prevented Swift from being in his absence chosen prolocutor of the House of Convocation;§ an

may be very bad, for I see not how they can well want him neither, and he would make a troublesome enemy." Swift's Works, Vol. II. p. 246.

* "The Whigs whisper, that our new ministry differ among themselves, and they begin to talk out Mr. Secretary; they have some reasons for their whispers, although I thought it was a greater secret. I do not much like the posture of things; I always apprehended, that any falling out would ruin them, and so I have told them several times." Ibid. Vol. II. p. 344.

† See Swift's Works, Vol. III. p. 42, 58, 87.

‡ Ibid. Vol. XVI. p. 73. § Ibid. p. 67.

Digitized by Google

honour with which he would obviously have been much pleased, though he declined to solicit it.

Upon Swift's arrival at London, he found that the disagreement between the ministers approached near to an explosion, and that he himself was the only mutual friend who would venture to mediate between them. There is reason to think his remonstrances produced some temporary effect. Meanwhile, he was once more engaged in the general contest of politics, and was not long without experiencing some of the perils of that envenomed warfare.

Swift's principal antagonists, on this occasion, had both been old friends. The first was Burnet, whom, in an ironical preface to the Bishop of Sarum's introduction to the third volume of the History of the Reformation, he treats as one whom he delighted to insult; upbraiding the venerable champion, who had produced a pamphlet as a precursor of his folio, with his mighty haste to take the field as a skirmisher, "armed only with a pocket pistol, before his great blunderbuss could be got ready, his old rusty breast-plate scoured, and his cracked head-piece mended."* It does not appear that Burnet ever noticed this harsh and disrespectful treatment, nor does Swift's name occur in that history of his own times, where he commemorates so many individuals of inferior note; and the Dean finally recorded the bishop's character as that of a man of generosity and good-nature, but who at last became party-mad, and saw Popery under every bush.

Swift's controversy with Steele was longer, fiercer, and attended by more serious consequences for both parties. We gave an account of their rupture, p. 98; and it now was increased to a public controversy. In the Guardian, No. 128, Steele had attacked the ministers for negligence in enforcing that stipulation of the treaty of Utrecht, which respected the demolition of Dunkirk, and being then about to be elected Member of Parliament for Stockbridge, he pursued the subject in a pamphlet, entitled "The Importance of Dunkirk

* Swift's Works, Vol. IV. p. 147.

Digitized by Google

Considered," in a letter to the bailiff of that borough. Swift, with less feeling of their ancient intimacy than of their recent quarrel, appears readily and eagerly to have taken up the gauntlet. His first insulting and vindictive answer is entitled "The Importance of the Guardian considered," in which the person, talents, history, and morals of his early friend, are the subject of the most acrimonious raillery; and where he attempts to expose the presumption of Steele's pretensions to interfere in the councils of princes, whether as a publisher of Tatlers and Spectators, and the occasional author of a Guardian; or from his being a soldier, alchemist, gazetteer, commissioner of stamped papers, or gentleman-usher. Besides this diatribe, there appeared two others, in which Swift seems to have had some concern;* and a ludicrous paraphrase on the first ode of the second book of Horace, in ridicule of Steele, which is entirely his composition. It is to Steele's honour, that although he appears to have rushed hastily, and without due provocation, into the quarrel with Swift, he did not condescend to retort these personali-

* The "Character of Richard Steele, Esquire, with some remarks by Toby, Abel's Kinsman, 1713." Swift's Works, Vol. V. p. 441. Swift was the supposed author of this piece, which is, however, with more probability, ascribed to Dr. Wagstaffe, under his directions. It is certain that Steele bestowed more attention upon it than on most of the satirical shafts by which he was assailed; and, from a particular expression, I conceive that he ascribed it, at least in a considerable degree, to Swift. "I think I know the author of this, and to show him I know no revenge, but in the method of heaping coals on his head by benefits, I forbear giving him what he deserves, for no other reason, but that I know his sensibility of reproach is such, that he would be unable to bear life itself, under half the ill language he has given me." *The Englishman, No. 57, being the close of the paper so called.* Swift himself alludes to the sensitiveness of disposition here imputed to him, as having been an attribute of his earlier character. "I was originally as unwilling to be libelled as the nicest man can be, but having been used to such treatment ever since I unhappily began to be known, I am now grown hardened." See his letter to Dr. Jinny, 8th June 1732, in his Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 6.

The other satire against Steele, is "A Letter from the facetious Dr. Andrew Tripe at Bath, to the venerable Nestor Ironside, 1714." See this tract, in which Arbuthnot probably had some share, Swift's Works, Vol. IV. p. 279.

Digitized by Google

ties. He was then engaged, with the assistance of Addison, Hoadley, Lechmere, and Marshall, in the composition of a pamphlet called the Crisis, intended to alarm the public upon the danger of the Protestant succession, and the predominating power of France. This treatise was brought forward with a degree of pomp and parade, which its contents hardly warrant, being chiefly a digest of the acts of parliament respecting the succession, mixed with a few comments, of which the diction is neither forcible, elegant, nor precise; while, by the extraordinary exertions made to obtain subscriptions, it was plain that the relief of the author's necessities was the principal object of the publication. The opportunity did not escape Swift, who published his celebrated comment under the title of "The public spirit of the Whigs, set forth in their generous encouragement of the author of the Crisis; with some observations on the seasonableness, candour, erudition, and style of that treatise." In this pamphlet, Steele was assailed by satire as personal and as violent as in the former. Still, however, he remained unmoved, and his only reply was moderate and dignified. In defence of himself and his writings, before the House of Commons, among several passages in former publications, from which he claimed the honours due to a friend of virtue, he quoted the favourable character given in the Tatler of the project for the Advancement of Religion, and of its author, with the following simple and manly comment: "The gentleman I here intended was Dr. Swift. This kind of man I thought him at that time: we have not met of late, but I hope he deserves this character still." As it seldom happens that two intimate friends can descend to personal altercation without possessing means of mutual reproach, most readers will be of opinion, that Steele's forbearance, under gross provocation, deserved a better requital than the severe verses, entitled, "John Dennis the Sheltering poet's invitation to Richard Steele, the secluded party-writer and member, to come and live with him in the Mint."* Dennis's

* Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 331.

Digitized by Google

share of the satire was undoubtedly and amply deserved, by his own scurrilities against Swift;* though the wit of the piece, as directed against Steele, is no apology for its cruelty. But, in political hostility, Swift had the attributes of Homer's champion,

> Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,
> Jura negat sibi nata, nihil non arrogat armis.

Meanwhile, ere the controversy had ceased between those two eminent literary characters, the strong talons of power had well nigh pounced upon both, like the kite upon the puny duellists in the old fable.

Of Steele it is only necessary to say, that, by the violence of a predominating majority, it was resolved that the papers called the Sequel of the Englishman and the Crisis were scandalous and seditious libels, and that Richard Steele, Esq. for his offence in writing them, be expelled the House of Commons. By a singular coincidence, his antagonist, Swift, experienced the frown of authority at the same juncture. About this time the Scottish peers were greatly displeased with the court, and their discontent was fomented by the celebrated John, Duke of Argyle, who now openly opposed the ministers with whom he had once acted. Steele, there-

* Of which the following is perhaps too ample a specimen: "By thy wonderful charity, thou canst be nothing but a scandalous priest, hateful to God, and detestable to man, and agreeable to none but devils; who makest it thy business to foment divisions between communities and private persons, in spite of that charity, which is the fundamental doctrine of that religion which thou pretendest to teach. How amazing a reflection is it, that in spite of that divine doctrine, the Christian world should be the only part of the globe embroiled in endless divisions! From whence can this proceed, but from priests like thee, who are the pest of society and the bane of religion? But it is not enough to say thou art a priest; it is time to point out what priest thou art: thou art a priest who madest thy first appearance in the world like a dry joker in controversy, a spiritual buffoon, an ecclesiastical jack-pudding, by publishing a piece of waggish divinity, which was writ with a design to banter all Christianty." What follows is too shocking for transcription, and only proves, that all the mighty mad raved in the person of John Dennis. The whole piece, which is entitled a Letter to the Examiner, may be found in Dennis's Letters, 2 vols. 1721.

Digitized by Google

fore, both in the Englishman and in the Crisis, omitted no opportunity of panegyrizing the Scottish nation, and extolling the wisdom of the Union. Swift, who disliked the Scots, and had quarrelled with Argyle,* did not lose an opportunity of feeding full his grudge against both. In the Public Spirit of the Whigs the Scots are characterized as "a poor fierce northern people;" the Union treated rather as a measure of state-necessity, flowing out of the Scottish act of security, than as that which was of itself desirable;† and the Duke of Argyle was glanced at as one of those Scottish nobles who appeared to be very zealous for dissolving the Union, although their whole revenues before that period would have ill maintained a Welsh justice of peace: and although they had since gathered more money than any Scotsman who had not travelled could form an idea of. It was besides stated, that the number of the Scottish nobility, joined to their poverty, was a great and necessary evil of the Union, and that to account it a benefit, as Steele had done in the Crisis, were as if, when a person of quality had married a portionless woman of inferior rank, it should be maintained as an advantage that she brought him as numerous a family of relations and servants as he had of his own. These expressions were highly resented in the upper House of Parliament. Lord Wharton, who certainly owed Swift little favour, made complaint to the House, and, being joined

* "How loved, how valued once, avail'd him not!"

Swift's original respect for the duke is evident from many passages in the Journal, as well as from an elegant letter, addressed to the duke while commanding in Spain, dated April 16, 1711.

The reader will find something of the quarrel between Argyle and Swift, in Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 24.

† This was a favourite opinion with Swift, who enlarges upon it in the Examiner. See his Sarmatian Apologue in the 19th No. of the Examiner, in his Works, Vol. III. p. 316. Also his remarkable assertion concerning Lord Somers,—"Neither shall I ever forget, that he readily owned to me that the Union was of no other service to the nation, than by giving a remedy to that evil which my Lord Godolphin had brought upon us by persuading the queen to pass the Scotch act of security."—*Memoirs relating to the Change of the Queen's Ministry*, Ibid. p. 178.

Digitized by Google

by a majority, the lord-treasurer was obliged to temporize and disown the pamphlet, and reprobate the expressions complained of. The offensive passage, which occupied about four pages, was hastily cancelled in the second edition; but this *amende honourable* had nearly come too late. Morphew the bookseller, and Barber the printer, were ordered into custody of the black rod. The former declared he knew nothing of the author, and Barber refused to answer any questions that might criminate himself. But Wharton, exclaiming that the House had nothing to do with the bookseller or printer, further than they could be made the instruments of discovering "the villainous author of that false and scandalous libel," proposed that Barber and his servants should be closely examined, and freed from those personal consequences, which they alleged as a reason for declining to give an answer. But the *finesse* of the ministers prevented a course of proceeding which must have led to the discovery of Swift. They directed a prosecution against Barber personally, which rendered it impossible to examine him in evidence against the author.* The resentment of the peers, and particularly of the Scottish nobles, was rather increased than allayed by this pretended sacrifice, which they considered in its true light of an evasion. The latter went in a body to the queen, headed by the Duke of Argyle, and required, that, in satisfaction for the affront which they had sustained, a proclamation should be issued, offering a reward

* This is the transaction to which Swift alludes in the lines upon himself, the concluding line of which former biographers have not explained particularly:—

> "Now through the realm a proclamation spread
> To fix a price on his devoted head,
> While innocent he scorns ignoble flight,
> His watchful friends preserve him by a *sleight*."—
> Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 317.

It appears, however, that Swift did meditate flight in case discovery had taken place. In the letter to his friend in Ireland about renewing his license of absence, dated 29th July 1714, he says, "I was very near wanting it some months ago with a witness," which can only allude to the possibility of his being obliged to abscond.—Ibid. Vol. XIX. p. 273.

Digitized by Google

for discovery of the author of the alleged libel. The same was moved by Wharton in the House of Lords; and a proclamation, proposing a reward of £300, was issued accordingly. No one was in doubt as to the real author; but Swift, conscious of the protection of Oxford, exhibited no symptoms of alarm, though shunned by many of his former friends, who now conceived him to be singled out for prosecution. Meantime Lord Oxford indemnified Morphew and Barber by a sum of money (£150,) sent anonymously to Swift for the purpose of being conveyed to them; quashed, it would seem, the offer of a private informer to discover the author of the libel, provided he could be assured of the reward;* and finally, by discharge of the prosecution against Barber, when the clamour excited by the pamphlet was somewhat abated, consigned the whole matter to oblivion.

Swift's favour with the lord-treasurer, Oxford, had now ripened into the closest intimacy. How dearly Swift loved that statesman, in whom there were many qualities deserving of such attachment, appears from a thousand expressions in his letters and journal. The despair which he expressed at his being wounded by Guiscard is like that of a brother mourning for a brother.† Swift retained to his dying day, as a sacred relic, the pen knife with which the wound was inflicted;‡ and it

* Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 103, 104.

† Ibid. Journal, Vol. II. p. 200, 201.

‡ Mr. Deane Swift has thus described the weapon:—

"I have seen," says Mr. Swift, "the pen-knife, with a tortoise-shell handle, and when shut it was just about the length of a man's little finger. But, as the blade was broken within half an inch of the handle, by the violence of the blow, against one of the ribs of the earl, the doctor had a hole drilled through that part of the blade which was broken off, and another hole through that part of the piece which remained in the handle, and by that contrivance they were both held together by a little silver chain."

Dr. Delany, in a pamphlet published in 1755, containing some other remarks upon Mr. Deane Swift's life of his great relative, gave, in very rude terms, an absolute contradiction to the above account, affirming that the knife, with the clothes which the lord-treasurer wore when he received the wound, were preserved as relics by the family of Oxford. In this last circumstance Delany's statement has since proved true, but it was not so when made, and afforded no ground for the uncivil terms in which he controverted Mr. Deane

Digitized by Google

would seem, that, on one occasion, he secured his friend's life from a dangerous attempt of the same kind, at the hazard of his own.

This strange accident made much noise at the time, but has been unnoticed by Swift's numerous biographers. While the lord treasurer was dressing, a packet was delivered, the appearance of which excited the suspicion of Swift. He opened it with great precaution, and it was found to contain, according to the first account, three pistols cocked and charged, with a string attached so as to discharge them when the box should be opened. But afterwards the three pistols proved to be the barrels of large ink-horns filled with powder, connected with a pistol-lock for striking fire. This story was ridiculed by the Whigs, under the name of the band-box plot, and they did not hesitate to allege that Swift, the lucky discoverer, was also the ingenious deviser of the machine. But if the imputation had been just, there seems no reason why he should have disgraced his contrivance by the use of such ridiculous

Swift's averment, since the knife was only given to the Oxford family after the Dean's death, and the publication of Delany's pamphlet. Dr. Lyons gives a minute account of the circumstance in a letter now before the editor, dated 8th March 1783, and addressed to Deane Swift, Esq. :—

"I have been honoured with the receipt of yours, dated 30th January, by the hands of my much esteemed friend and neighbour, Mrs. Swanton, together with your animadversions on Dr. Delany's erroneous account of that vile assassin Guiscard's pen-knife, with which he attempted to take away the life of Lord-Treasurer Harley.

"After the death of my ever to be honoured and admired friend and patron, Dr. Swift, I took care of that knife, and also of the first plaster that was taken off the wound, both which the good Dean had preserved, and did afterwards wrap them together in a paper, with a short account of the villain's attempt. In 1760, when my private affairs occasioned my journey to London, I took this relic with me, in order to put it into the hands of Lord Oxford, or some branch of that noble family, to be delivered to him; and being one day invited by Alderman Harley, when Lord-Mayor, to dine at the Mayoralty House, I gave him the said knife, &c. to be given to the said Earl of Oxford, which knife he was much pleased to see, and did promise to put into his lordship's hand very shortly, as he expected to see him soon. I left London quickly after, and heard no more since."

Digitized by Google

implements, since, though he had employed real pistols, he might easily have avoided danger in opening a box of which he knew the contents beforehand. Swift has himself assured Stella, that his life was actually in danger, and that he had saved that of the minister; and there appears no good reason for refusing our belief to both assertions. The attempt of Guiscard, and a much more melancholy and unfortunate example of our own time, may serve to convince us, that the life of a first minister may be endangered or destroyed by attempts as improbable as atrocious.

Swift was trusted by Oxford in his private as well as public affairs. He was supposed to have assisted in the negotiations which preceded the alliance between the lord-treasurer's eldest son, and the only child of the Duke of Newcastle, and in the arrangements which followed for division of the duke's inheritance betwixt her and Lord Pelham, the male-heir. This was a point which Oxford had so greatly at heart, that Bolingbroke afterwards termed it the ultimate end of his administration.* Swift, upon this joyful occasion, wrote the poetical address to Lord Harley on his marriage.† But his

* "In the management of this disagreeable business (Lord Harley's marriage, and the division of the inheritance of the Duke of Newcastle,) the treasurer had the help of a priest's craft as well as his own, and it was said a good deanery was the reward of the Reverend Doctor's pains-taking in that pious negotiation." Oldmixon's History, p. 559. This is invidiously recorded; nor is there any ground for the aspersion, supposing, which is highly probable, that the fact of Swift being consulted in the negotiation is in itself well-grounded.

† See his Works, Vol. XIV. p. 114. It is worthy of observation that four lines in this poetical congratulation which were erased by the author, have been restored, and I think with taste and judgment, by his kinsman, Mr. Deane Swift. The lines are those in Italics which conclude the following quotation:

Thus the bright Empress of the Morn
Chose for her spouse a mortal born,
The goddess made advances first,
Else what aspiring mortal durst.
Though like a virgin of fifteen,
She blushes when by mortals seen,
Still blushes and with speed retires,
When Sol pursues her with his fires.

Digitized by Google

sympathetic friendship is still more deeply manifested in his letter to the lord-treasurer, on the death of his daughter, the Marchioness of Caermarthen, than which there is nothing in the English language more beautifully and feelingly expressed.* And the constancy of his attachment, at the most distressing period of Oxford's life, was such as well made good the manly expressions of regard with which, on retiring from London, he bade his lordship farewell. "When I was with you, I have said, more than once, that I would never allow quality or station made any real difference between men. Being now absent and forgotten, I have changed my mind: you have a thousand people who can pretend they love you, with as much appearance of sincerity as I; so that, according to common justice, I can have but a thousandth part in return of what I give. And this difference is wholly owing to your station. And the misfortune is still the greater, because I loved you so much the less for your station; for, in your public capacity, you have often angered me to the heart; but, as a private man, never once."†

The favour of Swift appears now to have been greater than ever, and most of the Irish affairs of consequence were determined by his advice and opinion.‡ It was the general opinion, that he would soon be promoted to a bishop's see; and Lord Nottingham, on whom he had reflected severely in many of his satirical productions,§ took an opportunity of retaliation

* Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 78.

† Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 130.

‡ See the Letters of Lord Primate Lindsay, Sir Constantine Phipps, &c., Earl of Anglesea, &c., in his correspondence at this period, in his Works, Vol. XVI.

§ See the "Excellent New Song, being the intended Speech of a famous Orator against Peace," (Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 295.) of which Walpole complained in the House of Commons, and, pronouncing it to be written by Swift *and his Whimsical Club*, threatened to bring him to account for it. See also "Toland's Invitation to Dismal," a name bestowed on Nottingham from the gravity of his physiognomy. Nottingham was also assailed repeatedly in the Examiner and other satirical pieces, and in a ballad called the Hue and Cry after Dismal. To return these attentions, Nottingham

Digitized by Google

when the celebrated schism bill was depending in the House of Lords. Adverting particularly to an enactment, that all teachers of youth should be licensed by the bishop or archbishop of the diocese, he proceeded thus:—"My Lords, I have many children, and I know not whether God Almighty will vouchsafe to let me live to give them the education I could wish they had; therefore, my Lords, I own I tremble when I think that a certain divine, who is hardly suspected of being a Christian, (meaning, as we read in the annals, Dr. Swift,) is in a fair way of being a bishop, and may one day give license to those who shall be intrusted with the instruction of youth."* And it appears from different passages in his correspondence, that the hopes of Swift's friends coincided with the fears of his enemies, respecting his expected promotion; and that there were expectations held out of a living in Yorkshire, to be obtained through the influence of Lord Keeper Harcourt. These hopes and fears, however, were so far disappointed, that Swift failed in obtaining a boon of much less consequence, though then essential to his comfortable settlement in life.

The debts which he was obliged to incur at entering upon his deanery, were very considerable, amounting to at least a thousand pounds, an expense which he was unprepared to undergo. He therefore seems to have considered himself entitled, when accepting a promotion so much beneath the character in which he had acted, to be at least indemnified of the charges of induction;† and, in his own peculiar manner, he stated

seems, more than once, to have invoked the vengeance of the House of Lords against the author of this annoyance:

> Now Finch alarms the Lords: He hears for certain
> This dangerous priest has got behind the curtain,
> Finch, famed for tedious elocution, proves
> That Swift oils many a spring which Harley moves.
> *Verses by Swift on himself.* Ibid. Vol. XII. p. 316.

* Oldmixon's History, p. 554.

† Journal, April 23, 1713. "I thought I was to pay but 600*l.* for the house, but the Bishop of Clogher says 800*l.*; first-fruits, 150*l.*; and so, with patent, 1000*l.* in all; so that I shall not be the better for the deanery these three years. I hope in some time

Digitized by Google

that the queen should either pay up this debt for him, or hang him, since he had deserved the one or the other.*

The lord-treasurer, with his usual procrastination, or from motives of public economy, jested on the subject, but did nothing, and Swift's situation must have been embarrassing to any one of less determined prudence. On his return to England, after his instalment, he addressed to Oxford that celebrated and beautiful imitation of Book I. epistle vii. and sat. vi. Book II. of Horace, with which every reader must be familiar. The intention was to complain of the expenses attending his preferment,

> ——————————— all vexations,
> Patents, instalments, abjurations,
> First fruits, and truths, and chapter-treats,
> Dues, payments, fees, demands, and cheats,
> The wicked laity's contriving,
> To hinder clergymen from thriving.

It contains even a more plain intimation of his difficulties.

they will be persuaded to give me some money here to clear off these debts. I will finish the book I am writing, before I can go over, and they expect I shall pass next winter here, and then I will drive them to give me a sum of money."—Swift's Works, Vol. III. p. 157.

Again, 16th May, 1713. "I shall be ruined, or at least sadly cramped, unless the Queen will give me a thousand pounds. I am sure she owes me a great deal more. Lord-treasurer rallies me upon it, and I believe intends it, but *quando?*" Vol. III. p. 161.—In a letter to Lord Keeper Harcourt, May, 1713, he hints at the same subject: "Lord-treasurer uses me barbarously, appoints to carry me to Kensington, and makes me walk four miles at midnight. He laughs when I mention a thousand pound which he gives me, though a thousand pounds is a very serious thing."—Ibid. Vol. XVI. p. 38.

* This we learn from the following memorandum of Dr. Birch: "The Reverend Mr. Orr, Archdeacon of Ferns, gave me an account of a letter of Swift's, which has never been published, to Lord Bolingbroke. It was dated in July 1713, from his living of Laracor, complaining of his being left by his friends in Ireland, and telling his lordship that he should remind him of David's prayer, which the lord-treasurer would direct him to the Psalm and verse for, 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell.' That when he returned to England, he would certainly petition the queen for the thousand pounds she had promised him; for that she ought to pay him that thousand pounds, or hang him, for he had deserved either the one or the other."

Digitized by Google

Poor Swift, with all his losses vext,
Not knowing where to turn him next,
Above a thousand pounds in debt,
Takes horse ——

As well as

Lewis, the Dean will be of use;
Send for him up, take no excuse;
Or let it cost five hundred pound,
No matter where the money's found,
It is but so much more in debt,
And that they ne'er consider'd yet.*

All these hints of the loss he was actually sustaining, seem to have been lost upon Oxford, and only attracted Bolingbroke's attention, at a time when his power was tottering, and his favour inefficient. Swift's solicitude on this subject, has been quoted as derogating from the high tone of independence assumed by him, on refusing the sum formerly offered by the treasurer; and it has been alleged that both cases were exactly parallel, unless in so far as the amount made a difference. But it must be considered, that three years public services had been remunerated with a professional situation of no common description of dignity indeed, and future emolument, but attended in the mean time with such an immediate expense, as must have embarrassed, for life perhaps, a man of less economy, and which reduced Swift to great temporary inconvenience. The grant of a sum of money, therefore, to render a preferment, which in every respect was beneath his pretensions, instantly productive and effectual, could no more be considered as an eleemosynary gratuity, than the acceptance of the deanery itself could be termed inconsistent with his having refused to be Lord Oxford's chaplain. Such grants have frequently been made in every department of the public service, and differ widely from the secret service-money doled out to party-writers from time to time, in proportion to the satisfaction which they afford to their patrons.

In another particular Swift was to undergo disappoint-

* Swift's Works, Vol. XII. pp. 313, 322.

Digitized by Google

ment. He was still busy with his History of the Peace of Utrecht, and became disposed to extend it into a general account of Queen Anne's reign. With the view of obtaining access to materials, and perhaps of gratifying a wish long since entertained,* he was desirous to be named historiographer. The appointment is in the gift of the lord high chamberlain. But Swift, who seems to have had some reason for disliking the Duke of Shrewsbury,† whom he terms a person of no steadiness or sincerity, and by whom the office was held, endeavoured to supersede the necessity of applying to him, by presenting a direct memorial to Queen Anne.‡ His experience in courts might have taught him the jealousy entertained of official patronage, but he probably conceived, that his influence with ministers would surmount, in his particular case, all obstacles arising from it. He was mistaken. Oxford and Bolingbroke, each busied in preparing for an impending struggle, did not choose to excite the chamberlain's dislike, by encroaching on his rights of office; and Shrewsbury, to whom Swift made no personal application, filled up the situation with a dependent of his own.§

The dissensions among the ministers seem to have interrupted the meetings of the society of Brothers. But Swift had formed, in its stead, the celebrated Scriblerus Club, an association rather of a literary, than a political character. Oxford and St. John, Swift, Arbuthnot, Pope, and Gay, were the members. It was the well-known object of their united powers, to compose a

* See his Letter to Addison, p. 80.

† This was erroneously applied to the Earl, afterwards Duke of Kent, in the first edition. But he was out of office at the time, and succeeded by the Duke of Shrewsbury.

‡ See his Memorial, in his Works, Vol. XVI. p. 153.

§ In a letter to Pope, mentioning the post of historiographer, as designed for him, he adds, "but as it was at the disposal of a person who had not the smallest share of steadiness or sincerity, I disdained to accept it." Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 345. This can only imply, he might have had it for asking it of the lord chamberlain, for it is certain he did apply to the queen by memorial, and was displeased with Bolingbroke for not obtaining it for him. See his Works, Vol. XVI. pp. 151, 153, 156, 179, and compare them with the above passage.

Digitized by Google

satire upon the abuse of human learning. Part of their labours has been preserved in the Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus, which gave name to the society, and part has been rendered immortal by the travels of Lemuel Gulliver; but the violence of political faction, like the storm that spares the laurel no more than the cedar, dispersed this little band of literary brethren, and prevented the accomplishment of a task for which talents so various, so extended, and so brilliant, can never again be united.

Oxford and Bolingbroke, themselves accomplished scholars, patrons and friends both of the persons and of the genius thus associated, led the way, by their mutual animosity, to the dissolution of the confraternity. Their discord had now arisen to the highest pitch, and was scarce veiled under the thin forms of official intercourse. Swift again tried the force of humorous expostulation in his fable of the Fagot,* where the ministers are called upon to contribute their various badges of office, to make the bundle strong and secure. With infinite delicacy the poet omitted all mention of Bolingbroke; the animosity between Oxford and him was too rankling a wound to endure being tickled. But all was in vain; and at length, tired of this scene of murmuring and discontent, quarrel, misunderstanding, and hatred, the Dean, who was almost the only common friend who laboured to compose these differences, made a final effort, of which the result shall be given in his own words to Lord Oxford, son of the statesman: "When I returned to England, I found their quarrels and coldness increased. I laboured to reconcile them as much as I was able; I contrived to bring them to my Lord Masham's, at St. James's. My Lord and Lady Masham left us together. I expostulated with them both, but could not find any good consequences. I was to go to Windsor next day with my lord-treasurer: I pretended business that prevented me; expecting they would come to some [reconciliation.] But I followed them to Windsor, where my Lord Bolingbroke told me, that my scheme had

* Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 318.

Digitized by Google

come to nothing. Things went on at the same rate: they grew more estranged every day. My lord-treasurer found his credit daily declining. In May before the queen died, I had my last meeting with them at my Lord Masham's. He left us together; and therefore I spoke very freely to them both, and told them, 'I would retire, for I found all was gone.' Lord Bolingbroke whispered me, 'I was in the right.' Your father said, 'All would do well.' I told him, 'That I would go to Oxford on Monday, since I found it was impossible to be of any use.' "*

Nothing, indeed, was now left for Swift, but to execute the resolution he had repeatedly announced, of retreating from the scene of discord, without taking part with either of his contending friends. He set out for Oxford on the Monday succeeding his ineffectual interview, and from thence went to the house of the reverend Mr. Gery at Upper Letcombe, Berkshire, where he resided for some weeks in the strictest seclusion. His feeling of this melancholy change, from all that was busy and gay, to the dulness and uniformity of a country vicarage, is expressed in a letter to Miss Vanhomrigh.† The secession of Swift from the political world excited the greatest surprise—the public wondered,‡—the party writers exulted in a thousand ineffectual libels, discharged against the retreating champion of the high church,§

* Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 74.

† June 8, 1714. Works, Vol. XIX. p. 336.

‡ See Pope's Letter, 18th June 1714, Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 121, and that of Thomas Harley, 19th June 1714. Ibid. p. 123.

§ One of these, which exhibits a good deal of humour, was called, A Hue and Cry after Dean Swift, containing a copy of his Diary, &c. It is reprinted in his Works, Vol. XVI. p. 200. It will surprise the reader, in perusing this, how closely the libeller has touched many of Swift's real habits; and the circumstance serves to show, more plainly than a thousand general allegations, that even the most private particulars concerning him, had been for some years the object of public attention. His minute register of petty expenses, and the little shifts he adopted to diminish them, are mimicked very much in the style of his own Journal, and two or three circumstances in the Diary happened to coincide whimsically enough with the actual fact. 1*mo*, He left Ford to settle for his handkerchiefs: Compare the Diary, Ibid. Vol. XVI. p. 201, Saturday, with p. 157 of the same volume. 2*dly*, If he did not borrow money of his bookseller, as in

Digitized by Google

—and his friends conjured him in numerous letters, to return and reassume the task of a peace-maker. This he positively declined, but he seems to have meditated the extraordinary plan of an appeal to the public, at least to the Tory part at large, against those errors on which the administration seemed splitting asunder.

With this view, he composed the "Free Thoughts on the State of Public Affairs," in which it is remarkable, that, although he loved Oxford far better than Bolingbroke, and indeed better than any other man who lived, yet almost the whole censure expressed in the piece falls to the share of that statesman. His affectation of mystery, his want of confidence in his colleagues, his temporizing with the opposite party, and maintaining many of the Whigs in office, are noticed at length, and with some severity. The infatuation of the internal dissension of the ministers, compared to a ship's crew quarrelling in a storm, or when within gun-shot of the enemy, is the only particular in which Bolingbroke shares the blame with Oxford. The measures recommended as a remedy for the imminent danger, are such as suited the headlong audacity of the former, rather than the slow and balancing policy of Harley. These are, 1*st*, to

the Diary, (*ibidem*,) he seems to have made such an arrangement with Barber, his printer, who tells him all his bills shall be answered, p. 132. And though he did not then take exclusively to reading the civil wars of England, (*ibidem*,) yet, after the decline of his faculties, it was the only work he perused, and he read it thrice over. In two particulars the Diary misrepresents his habits. Swift never appears to have smoked tobacco, and certainly never used wine, nor any liquor, to excess.

The following notice of Swift occurs in a poem On the late Examiner, which appeared about this time.

ON THE LATE EXAMINER.

O Jonathan! of merry fame,
As Swift in fancy as in name,
Here lie, as thou hast often done,
Thy holy mother's pious son;
Deprived of paper, pen, and ink,
And, what is worse, deprived of drink;
For lo! thy idol Ox, thy Staff and Rod,
As thou would'st say, are dropp'd by God, &c.
Political Merriment, 1714.

Digitized by Google

achieve a complete predominance of the Tory party, by an absolute exclusion of the dissenters, termed the open enemies of the Church of England, from every degree of power, civil or military; a disqualification to be extended likewise to all Whigs and low-church men, affirmed to be her secret adversaries, unless promotion be earned by a sincere reformation. This great work was to be accompanied by a new modelling of the army, especially of the royal guards, which are pronounced fitter, in their existing state, to guard a prince to the bar of a high-court of justice, than to secure him on the throne. *2dly*, After a thorough, and doubtless a sincere disavowal, of the exiled branch of the House of Stuart, it is strongly recommended that all secret intercourse between any party in England and the court of Hanover be broken off; that the visits of the presumptive heir, and his claims to be called to Parliament, be no longer pressed upon the queen without her permission; and that the electoral prince should be required to declare his utter dislike of factious persons and principles, more especially of the party who affected to be peculiarly zealous for his rights, and to avow himself entirely satisfied with her majesty's proceedings at home and abroad. This was bold, daring, uncompromising counsel, better suited to the genius of him who gave it than to that of the British nation, and most likely, if followed, might have led to civil war. The treatise was, however, sent by Swift to his friend Charles Ford, and, with great precaution, through a circuitous channel, and, under a feigned name, transmitted by him to Barber the printer. Barber, being patronized by Bolingbroke, showed the manuscript, upon his own authority, to that statesman, who lost no time in making such additions and alterations, as were calculated to render it still more unfavourable to Oxford, and more suitable to his own political intrigues. On learning that such alterations were made, Swift, whose intention it had ever been to preserve the most perfect neutrality betwixt his great friends, and, if possible, to reunite them, but by no means to assist the one to the prejudice of the other, commissioned Ford to demand back the manuscript. It was recovered from the secre-

Digitized by Google

tary of state and the typographer, after some hesitation, delay, and difficulty. And thus, the publication of this tract, which undoubtedly might have produced a great, though perhaps a dangerous effect, at that critical period, was laid entirely aside. He seems to have meditated another political pamphlet at the same time, apparently the memoirs relating to the change of ministry in 1710. But it must have been in somewhat a different form from that in which it was finally published.*

Meantime every post brought Swift, from various quarters, and with varying comments, accounts of the successful intrigues of Bolingbroke. It is curious to compare the differing lights in which the same facts are placed by his correspondents, as affected by their own feelings or interest. Lewis adheres to the falling fortunes of Oxford,—Ford seems half disposed to worship the apparently rising star of Bolingbroke,—Arbuthnot, like Swift, blames both, and laments the consequences of their division. Bolingbroke himself omitted no means of conciliating Swift to the revolution which he was about to accomplish in the cabinet. He wrote to the Dean in the kindest terms of friendship; and when Arbuthnot reminded him of the memorial for the post of historiographer, he exclaimed, that to have suffered Swift, who had deserved so well of them, to have the least uneasy thought about such matters, would be among the eternal scandals of their government.† His good intentions, however, were in that case frustrated, as the lord chamberlain had, three weeks before, bestowed the office upon another.‡ But, to manifest his own zeal for Swift's interest, Bolingbroke caused an order on the treasury to be signed by the queen for the thousand pounds which Swift had in vain solicited from Oxford,

* On 14th August 1714, Ford writes, "I suppose Barber has given you an account of Lord Bolingbroke's pamphlet, (*i. e.* the Free Thoughts, of which Bolingbroke had detained the manuscript.) I long for the other." Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 199; and p. 216, 14th Sept. Swift writes to Bolingbroke, "The ——— take this country; it has in three weeks spoiled two as good six-penny pamphlets as ever a proclamation was issued out against."

† Letter from Arbuthnot, Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 151.

‡ Mr. Maddox. See Ford's Letter, ibidem, p. 156.

Digitized by Google

and this he did during his short ministry of three days. The warrant, indeed, was rendered nugatory by the queen's death, but the good will of St. John was equally manifested. At the same time Lady Masham, by whose secret influence Oxford had been displaced, wrote to conjure Swift, by his charity and compassion for the queen, not to desert her cause at this crisis, but to stay, and be assured his advice would not be thrown away on thankless and indifferent ears.* Barber also was commissioned by Bolingbroke to inform Swift he would reconcile him with the Dutchess of Somerset, place him on a right footing with the queen, and, what perhaps might have been an equal temptation, that it was intended to comply with his advice by making a complete sweep of those Whigs who had been left in office. These flattering proposals seemed to be attended with instant benefit, and to open a prospect full upon the path of honour, ambition, and preferment. But almost the same post brought an affecting letter from Lord Oxford, the disgraced minister, now going alone to his country-seat in Herefordshire, and requesting Swift, if he had not tired him in their former *tete à tete* parties, to throw away so much time on one who loved him, as to attend him upon this melancholy journey. To Swift's immortal honour, he paused not a moment, but wrote to solicit a renewal of his license for absence, then on the point of expiring, not that he might share the triumph and prospects to which he was invited by the royal favourite and the new prime-minister, but in order to accompany his beloved friend and patron to neglect and seclusion.† "I meddle not with his faults, as he was a minister of state," are his manly expressions; "but you know his personal kindness to me was excessive; he distinguished and

* Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 168.

† A letter to a friend in Dublin, now published for the first time, in the edition of Swift's Works to which these Memoirs are prefixed, (Vol. XIX. p. 272.) shows that this proposal was not made in ceremony, but that Swift actually applied for license of absence to attend his patron. The direction is lost, but it was probably addressed to Archdeacon Walls, as in another letter to him (Ibid. Vol. XVI. p. 190.) he mentions having corresponded with him on the subject.

Digitized by Google

chose me above all men when he was great; and his letter to me the other day was the most moving imaginable."* It lessens not the merit of this sacrifice, that, within three days, fate closed the prospects of the Tory party by the death of Queen Anne, when the accession of George I. confounded the triumphant Bolingbroke and the disgraced Oxford in common peril and proscription.

Swift, under a shock sudden and overwhelming to his party in general, and deeply fraught with personal hatred to so active a partizan as himself, lost neither presence of mind, courage, nor perseverance. He gave the bold opinion, that it was yet possible to rally the Tories, providing common misfortune could unite those whom success had separated. He exhorted Bolingbroke to place himself at the head of the high-church party; and, like a veteran who assumes his arms to succour in peril the standard from which he had retired while it was victorious, he offered his own services in the field of political contest in the beginning of winter.† It was on this occasion that Arbuthnot used the memorable expression,—"Dean Swift keeps up his noble spirit, and, though like a man knocked down, you may behold him still with a stern countenance, and aiming a blow at his adversaries."‡ But the spirit of the Tories was totally broken, as is well described in a desponding letter of Lewis.§ And on the subject of reconciliation, Bolingbroke avowed such an inveteracy of hatred against Oxford, that he would rather have laid down his own life, than made common cause with him in defending that of both. His flight, and that of Ormond, with the imprisonment of Oxford, Wyndham, Prior, and others, completed the discomfiture and dispersion of Queen Anne's last ministry. These events took place when Swift himself, under the frown of power, had sought refuge in Ireland from the evils and

* Letter to Miss Vanhomrigh. Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 340.
† Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 199.
‡ Ibid. p. 214. § Ibid. p. 191.

Digitized by Google

dangers which impended over all the late ministers and their adherents.

It was now he experienced that height of unpopularity which the narrative of Lord Orrery has somewhat anticipated. The Irish Protestants, remembering the civil wars of 1689 and 1690, looked with utter abhorrence on all who were suspected of being favourable to the interest of the house of Stuart. This was the charge brought against Queen Anne's last ministry by their successors; it was countenanced by a remarkable passage in the declaration of the Chevalier de St. George, expressing the good intentions of his sister in his favour, when prevented by death; and, if limited to Bolingbroke's intrigues, that statesman's subsequent conduct, as well as Ormond's, gave it great probability. But the spirit of party made no distinction. All who had favoured the high-church interest were involved in a sweeping charge of Jacobitism, of which calumny Swift had his share. Libels on libels were showered against him; the rabble insulted him as he walked the street; and even young men of rank forgot his station and their own so far as to set the same example of wanton brutality. Nor was this the worst evil of his situation.* His former friends, including many who owed

* Such disgraceful occurrences occasioned the following petition to the House of Lords, on the wanton aggression of one of their members:

"The humble PETITION of JONATHAN SWIFT, D. D. and Dean of the Cathedral of St. Patrick's, Dublin,

"Most humbly sheweth,

"THAT your petitioner is advised by his physicians, on account of his health, to go often on horseback; and there being no place, in winter, so convenient for riding as the strand toward Howth, your petitioner takes all opportunities that his business or the weather will permit, to take that road: That in the last Session of Parliament, in the midst of winter, as your petitioner was returning from Howth with his two servants, one before and the other behind him, he was pursued by two gentlemen in a chaise, drawn by two high-mettled horses, in so violent a manner, that his servant, who rode behind him, was forced to give way, with the utmost peril of his life; whereupon your petitioner made what speed he could, riding to the right and left above fifty yards to the full extent of the said road; but the two gentlemen driving a light chaise, drawn by

Digitized by Google

him civility and gratitude, paid court to the opposite party, by treating him with rudeness and insult.* He

fleet horses, and intent upon mischief, turned faster than your petitioner, endeavouring to overthrow him: That by great accident your petitioner got safe to the side of a ditch, where the chaise could not safely pursue; and the two gentlemen stopping their career, your petitioner mildly expostulated with them; whereupon one of the gentlemen said, Damn you, is not the road as free for us as for you? and calling to his servant who rode behind him, said, Tom, (or some such name,) is the pistol loaden with ball? To which the servant answered, Yes, my lord, and gave him the pistol. Your petitioner often said to the gentleman, Pray, sir, do not shoot, for my horse is apt to start, by which my life may be endangered. The chaise went forward, and your petitioner took the opportunity to stay behind. Your petitioner is informed, that the person who spoke the words above-mentioned, is of your lordships' house, under the style and title of Lord Blaney; whom your petitioner remembers to have introduced to Mr. Secretary Addison, in the Earl of Wharton's government, and to have done him other good offices at that time, because he was represented as a young man of some hopes, and a broken fortune: That the said Lord Blaney, as your petitioner is informed, is now in Dublin, and sometimes attends your lordships' house. And your petitioner's health still requiring that he should ride, and being confined in winter to go on the same strand, he is forced to enquire from every one he meets, whether the said lord be on the same strand; and to order his servants to carry arms to defend him against the like, or a worse insult, from the said lord, for the consequences of which your petitioner cannot answer.

"Your petitioner is informed by his learned counsel, that there is no law now in being, which can justify the said lord, under colour of his peerage, to assault any of his majesty's subjects on the king's highway, and put them in fear of their lives, without provocation, which he humbly conceives, that by only happening to ride before the said lord, he could not possibly give.

"Your petitioner, therefore, doth humbly implore your lordships, in your great prudence and justice, to provide that he may be permitted to ride with safety on the said strand, or any other of the king's highways, for the recovery of his health, so long as he shall demean himself in a peaceable manner, without being put into continual fears of his life, by the force and arms of the said Lord Blaney."

* Among these, Sir Thomas Southwell, one of the commissioners of the revenue, often mentioned as a friend in Swift's Letters and Journal, distinguished himself, by answering Swift, when he had addressed him on some ordinary occasion of business, "I'll hold you a groat, Mr. Dean, I do not know you." Afterwards, when created Lord Southwell, he expressed regret for his conduct during the heat of party, and attempted to regain Swift's acquaintance, by saluting him with great politeness. But the Dean retorted his rudeness, prefaced by his own cant phrase, "I'll hold you a groat, my lord, I do not know you."

Digitized by Google

was obliged to secure his papers against the researches of government;* and it would seem that a packet, addressed to him from the Duke of Ormond's chaplain, was seized by a messenger. The slight authority upon which it is affirmed, that Dean Swift actually absconded, lest he should be made answerable for the treasonable contents, may justly be neglected, since no steps were taken against a man so obnoxious to government, who would scarcely have been overlooked, had there occurred any grounds on which he could be made personally responsible.† That he was considered, however, as a person disaffected, and liable to accusation, is evident from an expression of his old correspondent, Archbishop King, who seems to have yielded to no one in the art of conveying a sarcasm under the mask of a friendly wish or amicable caution. "We have a strong report that my Lord Bolingbroke will return here and be pardoned: certainly it must not be for nothing. I hope he can tell no ill story of you."‡ This unfriendly hint the Dean repels with the most indignant spirit. "I should be sorry," he commences, "to see my Lord Bolingbroke following the trade of an informer, because he is a person for whom I have always had, and still continue, a very great love and esteem. And as to myself, if I were of any importance, I should be very easy under such an accusation, much easier than I am to think your grace imagines me in any danger. I am surprised your grace could think, or act, or correspond with me for some years past, while you must needs believe me a most false and vile man, declaring to you, on all occasions, my abhorrence of the Pretender, and yet privately engaged with a ministry to bring him in. I always professed to be against the Pretender, and am

* See his Works, Vol. XVI. p. 224.

† The authority for the whole story is but slender. Tindal, in his Continuation of Rapin, copies, without quoting, the words of Oldmixon, and Oldmixon refers to the Annals of Boyer. "Posterity," says Oldmixon, "will be in amazement to find not one of these libellers made an example." And undoubtedly, posterity has been induced, from that very circumstance, greatly to doubt the grounds on which the historian has accused them.

‡ Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 268.

Digitized by Google

so still. And this is not to make my court, which I know is vain, for I own myself full of doubts, fears, and dissatisfactions, which I think on as seldom as I can: Yet, if I were of any value, the public may safely rely on my loyalty, because I look upon the coming of the Pretender as a greater evil than any we are likely to suffer, under the worst Whig ministry that can be found."*

It would be in vain to waste more words on this accusation, excepting that no one had more reason to dread the accession of a Catholic prince than the determined champion of the Church of England; nor could a counter-revolution, which must have been achieved by foreign aid, and supported by arbitrary and military authority, have been so odious to any one as to the resolved and undaunted defender of the liberties of Ireland. His manuscript Notes upon Addison's Freeholder, a paper designed to support the government during the insurrection of 1715, indicate, indeed, compassion for the insurgents, and no great respect for the reigning family, but intimate no approbation of the Jacobite principles, nor any wish for a restoration of the Stuart line. It is true that, to be even the apologist of these unfortunate persons, might, in the rigorous judgment of more zealous partizans, misbecome one who professed himself a Whig, though without modern refinements. If this be judged an inconsistency, it must be considered as one of those which frequently occur from the accidental collision of human passions with political principle. But, excepting in these momentary flashes of satire, if we examine the whole tenour of Swift's life, writings, and opinions, there cannot be an action, or line, or sentiment derived from his history, writings, or letters, to countenance the charge of Jacobitism with which he was at this period of his life so generally slandered.

The imputation of disaffection has often the same effect with the reality, especially in a provincial capital, where the retainers of party endeavour to supply

* Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 269.

Digitized by Google

their deficiency in real importance, by zeal, clamour, and intolerance. Swift seems, therefore, for some time, to have been secluded from the society of the great, powerful, and distinguished; and the companion of Oxford and Bolingbroke, of Prior, Pope, Gay, had to select his society from the men of kindred taste in his own order, with a few of more elevated rank, who either had the sense and spirit to "forsake politics for wit," or were not disinclined to high-church politics. Delany has enumerated several of these in a passage, where he repels with equal success and indignation, the assertion of Orrery, that Swift delighted in company of low rank, and parasitical manners. He mentions, that Swift's principal companions, the Grattans, seven brethren of high honour, in their various walks of life,* as generally acquainted, and as much beloved as any family in England, their ally, the Rev. Mr. Jackson, George Rochfort, and Peter Ludlow, both gentlemen of accomplishments, and, what Lord Orrery might think more material, of good birth, and easy fortune. He also enumerates Dr. Walmsley, Dr. Helsham, Dr. Sheridan, Mr. Stopford, afterwards Bishop of Cloyne, and himself; and what he says of Rochfort and Ludlow, may apply to most of Swift's society. "Greater companions he might have conversed with, but better he neither did, nor could."†

Amusing his leisure in this society, Swift had yet too much time remaining to reflect on his own disappointments, and the calamity of those who had lately been

* The eldest lived on his paternal fortune. One was a physician, one a merchant, and afterwards lord mayor of Dublin; one was head master of a free-school, with a large appointment, and the remaining three were clergymen. "Do you not know the Grattans?" said Swift to Lord Carteret, when he came over as lord-lieutenant; "then pray obtain their acquaintance. The Grattans, my lord, can raise 10,000 men." This was one of the instances in which Swift showed his desire of enhancing the importance of his friends. He alluded to the great popularity of the family, and Carteret seems to have found his report just, since Dr. Grattan was named physician to the lord-lieutenant and his family. He wrote to the Duke of Dorset concerning the Grattans, making use of the same phrase. See his Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 493.

† Delany's Observations, p. 95.

Digitized by Google

engaged with him on the public stage. Like a seaman wrecked upon a solitary island, we find him constantly lamenting the misfortunes and danger of the associates from whom he was divided,—longing for their society,—undervaluing, in his grief for their separation, the safety and the solitude which had fallen to his own lot. His thoughts were ever turning to "his friends in exile, or the Tower," nor did he omit all that was in his power to manifest his sympathy with their distress, at every risk to his own person and fortune. He corresponded with Lord Bolingbroke, even while in banishment, through bad report, and good report. He offered consolation to Lady Masham, and to the yet more unfortunate Dutchess of Ormond. But to Oxford, his patron and his friend, then imprisoned in the Tower, and threatened with impeachment for high treason, Swift manifested that affection which only generous and noble minds can feel, and which glows highest when it most compromises the safety of him by whom it is displayed. He claimed it as his right to offer his service and attendance during his friend's imprisonment—he entreated it as a boon: "It is the first time," are his striking words, "I ever solicited you in my own behalf, and if I am refused, it will be the first request you ever refused me."* Oxford seems to have declined an offer, which, without being useful to him, could only have involved a noble and disinterested friend in suspicion and danger. But the generosity and self-devotion by which it was dictated, should be equally remembered in Swift's favour, and silence for ever the obscure and unproved calumnies, which are inconsistent with the very nature of such a mind. He writes to Pope in this melancholy strain, "You know how well I loved both Lord Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke, and how dear the Duke of Ormond is to me: Do you imagine I can be easy while their enemies are endeavouring to take off their heads? *I nunc, et versus tecum meditare canoros.*"—And after an account of his living in the most secluded manner with a few servants, in the corner of a vast unfurnished house, he describes his amusements to be

* Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 232.

Digitized by Google

the task of defending his small dominions against the archbishop, and endeavouring to reduce his rebellious choir. *Perditur*, is the melancholy summing up, *perditur inter hæc misero lux.*

If it be possible that any one should perose these pages, to whom the wayward history of Swift's domestic misfortunes are altogether unknown, such a reader may be surprised, that, endowed with a competence which his economy was speedily increasing into opulence, he had not now at length relieved the tedium of celibacy, and diverted his painful reflections upon public affairs, and the fate of his friends, by seeking domestic comfort and society in an union with Stella, who had forsaken England on his account, and towards whom so much affection is expressed in the earlier part of his journal. But the fate of a third person was now entwined with theirs, and the misfortunes which followed must be the subject of an uninterrupted narrative.

SECTION V.

Swift's first Acquaintance with Miss Vanhomrigh—She follows him to Ireland—Swift's Marriage with Stella—Death of Miss Vanhomrigh—Poem of Cadenus and Vanessa—Swift's Studies during his retirement from 1714 *to* 1720—*His system of Life and Amusements—Engages in Irish Politics—His Proposal for Encouragement of Irish Manufactures—and other Tracts—Drapier's Letters—Swift's subsequent popularity.*

At the period of Swift's residence in England, he was possessed, in an eminent degree, of many of the qualities which are the surest passports to female favour. He was not only a man of the highest talents, but he enjoyed, in full extent, all the public notice and distinction which the reputation of such talents can

Digitized by Google

confer. He moved in the highest circles, was concerned in the most important business of the time, and had all the advantage of a name blown wide abroad in the world. In private society, the varied richness of his conversation, the extent of his knowledge, his unequalled powers of wit and humour, even the somewhat cynical eccentricities of his temper, joined to form a character equally interesting from its merit and originality. His manners, in these his better days, were but slightly tinged with the peculiarities which afterwards marked them more unpleasantly, and his ease and address were such as became the companion of statesmen and courtiers:

> "He moved, and bow'd, and talked with too much grace,
> Nor show'd the parson in his gait or face."

Thus accomplished, Swift was readily admitted to the intimate society of many of the most beautiful and accomplished women of the age. His correspondence with the unfortunate Mrs. Long, shows how well he knew to support the character of a favourite of the fair. The friendship of Lady Betty Germain, of Mrs. Barton, of the Countess of Winchelsea, the Dutchess of Ormond, Lady Masham, and many other ladies eminent for beauty or accomplishments, rank or fashion, evinces how high he stood in the estimation of those by whom it is almost every man's ambition to be distinguished. But these enviable talents of pleasing became, through an unfortunate contingence, the means of embittering, if not of abridging, the life of the possessor.

Amongst the families in London where Swift was chiefly domesticated, was that of Mrs. Vanhomrigh, a widow lady of fortune and respectability, who had two sons and two daughters.* The eldest daughter was

* She was the daughter of Mr. Stone the commissioner, and widow of Bartholomew Vanhomrigh, a Dutch merchant, who had been commissary of stores for King William during the Irish civil wars, and afterwards muster-master-general, and commissioner of the revenue. Notwithstanding his having enjoyed a large income, and purchased forfeited estates to the value of L.12,000 in Ireland, he did not leave above L.16,000 to be divided amongst his children at

Digitized by Google

Esther Vanhomrigh, better known by the poetical appellation of Vanessa. On her personal charms we are left in some uncertainty, since Cadenus has said little upon that topic, and, by other authorities, they have been rather depreciated.* But, when Swift became intimate in the family, she was not yet twenty years old, lively and graceful, yet with a greater inclination for reading and mental cultivation than is usually combined with a gay temper. This last attribute had fatal attractions for Swift, who, in intercourse with his female friends, had a marked pleasure in directing their studies, and acting as their literary Mentor; a dangerous character for him who assumes it, when genius, docility, and gratitude, are combined in a young and interesting pupil. From several passages in the Journal, Swift's constant and intimate familiarity in the Vanhomrigh family is manifest; and it is plain also, he soon felt that his acquaintance with Miss Esther was such as must necessarily give pain to Stella. While Vanessa was occupying much of his time, and much doubtless of his thoughts, she is never once mentioned in the Journal directly by name, and is only twice casually indicated by the title of Vanhomrigh's eldest daughter. There was, therefore, a consciousness on Swift's part, that his attachment to his younger pupil was of a nature which could not be gratifying to her predecessor, although he probably shut his own eyes to the consequences of an intimacy which he wished to conceal from those of Stella. Miss Vanhomrigh, in the meanwhile, sensible of the pleasure which Swift received from her society, and of the advantages of youth and fortune which she possessed, and ignorant of the peculiar circumstances in which he stood with respect to another, naturally, and

his death. His widow and family settled in London about 1709, and had a house in Bury-street, St. James's. Their vicinity to Swift's lodgings, and connexion with Ireland, probably first led to the intimacy which afterwards proved so fatal.

* Lord Orrery says Vanessa was not handsome: but it is certain he spoke only of her by report. Mr. Berwick has a picture of one of the Miss Vanhomrighs, but whether of Vanessa or her sister is, I believe, doubted.

Digitized by Google

surely without offence either to reason or virtue, gave way to the hope of forming a union with a man, whose talents had first attracted her admiration, and whose attentions, in the course of their mutual studies, had, by degrees, gained her affections, and seemed to warrant his own. It is easy for those who look back on this melancholy story, to blame the assiduity of Swift, or the imprudence of Vanessa. But the first deviation from the straight line of moral rectitude is, in such a case, so very gradual, and, on the female side, the shades of colour which part esteem from affection, and affection from passion, are so imperceptibly heightened, that they who fail to stop at the exact point where wisdom bids, have much indulgence to claim from all who share with them the frailties of mortality. The imprudent friends continued to use the language of friendship, but with the assiduity and earnestness of a warmer passion, until Vanessa rent asunder the veil, by intimating to Swift the state of her affections; and in this, as she conceived, she was justified by his own favourite, though dangerous maxim, of doing that which seems in itself right, without respect to the common opinion of the world. We cannot doubt that he actually felt the "shame, disappointment, guilt, surprise," expressed in his celebrated poem, though he had not courage to take the open and manly course, of avowing those engagements with Stella, or other impediments, which prevented him from accepting the hand and fortune of her rival. Perhaps he was conscious that such an explanation had been too long delayed, to be now stated without affording grounds for the heavy charge of having flattered Miss Vanhomrigh into hopes, which, from the nature of his own situation, could never be gratified. This remorseful consciousness, too, he might feel when looking back on his conduct, though until then he had blindly consulted his own gratification in seeking the pleasure of Vanessa's society, without being aware of the difficulties in which they were both becoming gradually entangled. Without, therefore, making this painful but just confession, he answered the avowal of Vanessa's passion, at first in raillery, and

Digitized by Google

afterwards by an offer of devoted and everlasting friendship, founded on the basis of virtuous esteem. Vanessa seems neither to have been contented nor silenced by the result of her declaration, but, to the very close of her life, persisted in endeavouring, by entreaties and arguments, to extort a more lively return to her passion, than this cold proffer was calculated to afford. It is difficult to ascertain when this eclaircissement took place, but it seems to have preceded Swift's departure for Ireland to take possession of his deanery, though it must certainly have been made after obtaining that preferment.* The effect of his increasing intimacy with the fascinating Vanessa, may be plainly traced in the Journal to Stella, which, in the course of its progress, becomes more and more cold and indifferent,—breathes fewer of those aspirations after the quiet felicity of a life devoted to M. D. and the willows at Laracor, uses less frequently the affectionate jargon, called the "little language," in which his fondness at first displays itself, —and, in short, exhibits all the symptoms of waning affection. Stella was neither blind to the altered style of his correspondence, nor deaf to the rumours which were wafted to Ireland. Her letters are not preserved, but, from several passages of the Journal, it appears, that they intimated displeasure and jealousy, which Swift endeavours to appease. But there are two passages, in particular, worthy of notice, as illustrative of the history of Stella and Vanessa. The first occurs when Swift obtains the Deanery of St. Patrick's. "If it be worth £400 a-year, he says," "overplus shall be divided .... besides usual ..."† an imperfect phrase, which, however, implies, that his relation with Stella was to continue on its former footing, and that she was only to share the advantage of his promotion, by an increase of her separate income. This hint was probably designed to bar any expectations of a proposal of marriage. Another ominous sentence in the Journal is the following intimation: "His (Mr. Vanhomrigh's)

* The name Cadenus is an anagram of Decanus.
† Swift's Works, Vol. III. p. 158.

Digitized by Google

eldest daughter is come of age, and going to Ireland to look after her fortune, and get it into her own hands."* This plan, which Miss Vanhomrigh afterwards accomplished, boded no good to the unfortunate Stella.

Upon Swift's return to Ireland, we may guess at the disturbed state of his feelings, wounded at once by ungratified ambition, and harassed by his affection being divided between two objects, each worthy of his attachment, and each having great claims upon him, while neither was likely to remain contented with the limited return of friendship in exchange for love, and that friendship, too, divided with a rival. The claims of Stella were preferable in point of date, and, to a man of honour and good faith, in every respect irresistible. She had resigned her country, her friends, and even hazarded her character, in hopes of one day being united to Swift. But, if Stella had made the greater sacrifice, Vanessa was the more important victim. She had youth, fortune, fashion; all the acquired accomplishments and information in which Stella was deficient; possessed at least as much wit, and certainly higher powers of imagination. She had, besides, enjoyed the advantage of having in a manner compelled Swift to hear and reply to the language of passion. There was, in her case, no Mrs. Dingley, no convenient third party, whose presence in society and community in correspondence, necessarily imposed upon both a restraint, convenient perhaps to Swift, but highly unfavourable to Stella. Vanessa could address Swift directly in her own name, and, as he was obliged to reply in the same manner, there is something in the eloquence of affection that must always extort a corresponding answer. There is little doubt, therefore, that Swift, at this time, gave Vanessa a preference in his affection, although, for a reason hereafter to be hinted, it is probable, that the death or removal of one of these far-famed rivals would not have accelerated his union with the other. At least we are certain, that, could the rivals have laid jealousy and desire to sleep, the lover's

* Journal, 15th August 1711, Ibid. Vol. II. p. 331.

Digitized by Google

choice would have been to have bounded his connexion with both within the limits of Platonic affection. That he had no intention to marry Vanessa, is evident from passages in his letters, which are inconsistent with such an arrangement, as, on the other hand, their whole tenour excludes that of a guilty intimacy. Before leaving England, he acquainted her with his determination to forget everything there, and to write as seldom as he could; and in the same letter he expresses his doubts of ever visiting England again,—doubts which implied a gross insult, had he at any time held out a prospect of their union, but something still more villainous, if we suppose the parties to have passed the limits of innocence.* On the other hand, his conduct, with respect to Stella, was equally dubious. So soon as he was settled in the deanery-house, his first care was to secure lodgings for Mrs. Dingley and Stella, upon Ormond's Quay, on the other side of the Liffy; and to resume, with the same guarded caution, the intercourse which had formerly existed between them. But circumstances soon compelled him to give that connexion a more definite character.

Mrs. Vanhomrigh was now dead. Her two sons survived her but a short time, and the circumstances of the young ladies were so far embarrassed by inconsiderate expenses, as gave them a handsome excuse for retiring to Ireland, where their father had left a small property near Celbridge. The arrival of Vanessa in Dublin excited the apprehensions of Swift, and the jealousy of Stella. However imprudently the Dean might have indulged himself and the unfortunate young lady, by frequenting her society too frequently during his residence in England, there is no doubt that he was alive to all the hazards that might accrue to the reputation and peace of both, by continuing the same intimacy in Dublin. But the means of avoiding it were no longer in his power, although his reiterated remonstrances assumed even the character of unkindness.† She impor-

* Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 334.

† The effect which such severity produced upon a character of

Digitized by Google

tuned him with complaints of neglect and cruelty, and it was obvious, that any decisive measure to break their correspondence would be attended with some such tragic consequence, as, though late, at length concluded their story. Thus engaged in a labyrinth, where perseverance was wrong, and retreat seemed almost impossible, Swift resolved to temporize, in hopes, probably, that time, accident, or the mutability incident to violent affections, might extricate himself and Vanessa from the snare in which his own culpable imprudence had involved them. Meanwhile, he continued to bestow on her those marks of regard which it was impossible to refuse to her feelings towards him, even if they had not been reciprocal. But the conduct which he adopted as kindest to Miss Vanhomrigh, was likely to prove fatal to Stella. His fears and affections were next awakened for that early favourite, whose suppressed grief and jealousy, acting upon a frame naturally delicate, menaced her health in an alarming manner. The feelings with which Swift beheld the wreck which his conduct had occasioned, will not bear description. Mrs. Johnson had forsaken her country, and clouded even her

Miss Vanhomrigh's ardent cast, will be best illustrated from her own words, in a letter to Swift, dated 1714. "You bid me be easy, and you would see me as often as you could. You had better have said, as often as you could get the better of your inclinations so much; or as often as you remember there was such a one in the world. If you continue to treat me as you do, you will not be made uneasy by me long. It is impossible to describe what I have suffered since I saw you last. I am sure I could have borne the rack much better than those killing, killing words of yours. Sometimes I have resolved to die without seeing you more; but those resolves, to your misfortune, did not last long. For there is something in human nature, that prompts one so to find relief in this world, I must give way to it: and beg you would see me, and speak kindly to me; for I am sure you'd not condemn any one to suffer what I have done, could you but know it. The reason I write to you, is, because I cannot tell it to you should I see you. For when I begin to complain, then you are angry; and there is something in your looks so awful, that it strikes me dumb. O! that you may have but so much regard for me left, that this complaint may touch your soul with pity! I say as little as ever I can; did you but know what I thought, I am sure it would move you to forgive me, and believe, I cannot help telling you this and live."

Digitized by Google

reputation, to become the sharer of his fortunes, when at their lowest; and the implied ties by which he was bound to make her compensation, were as strong as the most solemn promise, if indeed even promises of future marriage had not been actually exchanged between them. He employed Dr. St. George Ashe, Bishop of Clogher, his tutor and early friend, to request the cause of her melancholy, and he received the answer which his conscience must have anticipated—it was her sensibility to his recent indifference, and to the discredit which her own character had sustained from the long subsistence of the dubious and mysterious connexion between them. To convince her of the constancy of his affection, and to remove her beyond the reach of calumny, there was but one remedy. To this communication Swift replied, that he had formed two resolutions concerning matrimony:—one, that he would not marry till possessed of a competent fortune; the other, that the event should take place at a time of life which gave him a reasonable prospect to see his children settled in the world. The independence proposed, he said, he had not yet achieved, being still embarrassed by debt; and, on the other hand, he was past that term of life after which he had determined never to marry. Yet he was ready to go through the ceremony for the ease of Mrs. Johnson's mind, provided it should remain a strict secret from the public, and that they should continue to live separately, and in the same guarded manner as formerly. To these hard terms Stella subscribed; they relieved her own mind, at least, from all scruples on the impropriety of their connexion; and they soothed her jealousy, by rendering it impossible that Swift should ever give his hand to her rival. They were married in the garden of the deanery, by the Bishop of Clogher, in the year 1716.*

* The Bishop of Clogher, it is said, informed Bishop Berkeley of this secret, and by Berkeley's relict it was communicated to Mr. Monck Berkeley. See the Inquiry into the Life of Swift, in his Literary Reliques, p. 36. But I must add, that if, as affirmed by Mr. Monck Mason, Berkeley was in Italy from the period of the marriage to the death of the Bishop of Clogher, this communica-

Digitized by Google

Immediately subsequent to the ceremony, Swift's state of mind appears to have been dreadful. Delany, (as I have learned from a friend of his relict,) being pressed to give his opinion on this strange union, said, that about the time it took place, he observed Swift to be extremely gloomy and agitated, so much so, that he

tion could not have taken place. Dr. Madden told the same story to Dr. Johnson, upon the authority of Dr. Sheridan, to whom Stella unfolded the secret shortly before her death. And neither Mrs. Whiteway, nor any of Swift's intimate friends, excepting Dr. Lyon, doubted the fact of this unhappy marriage. Mrs. Sican's authority may also be added to the list of witnesses.

Since the first edition of this work appeared, some curious and elaborate notices concerning Swift's life have appeared in the History of the Cathedral of Saint Patrick's, Dublin, by William Monck Mason, Esq., who expresses his total disbelief of the prevailing report of a private marriage between Mrs. Esther Johnson and the Dean, with many strictures on the credulity of those previous biographers of Swift, by whom it had been received as probable. It must be conceded to both parties, in such a controversy, that it respects a doubtful and dark transaction, entered into by two persons, whose exact situation and feelings, with respect to each other, could only be known with precise accuracy to themselves. It was also a transaction in which the Dean is said to have exacted the closest secrecy; and that all which is known with respect to it, has rather transpired by the various channels intimated above, than become the subject of direct and positive evidence. It is therefore not wonderful, that the degree of testimony which establishes in the mind of one person a strong probability, may be of little weight in the opinion of another. Still, however, a report so distinctly traced to Sheridan, Delany, and Mrs. Whiteway, Swift's nearest intimates and friends, will have great weight with persons who consider the question without prepossession. The opinion expressed by Dr. Lyon is, however, certainly entitled to insertion, although the present editor is still of opinion, that it is almost entirely founded upon an argument *ex absurdo*, which might have been very applicable to any other individual, but does not apply to so singular a person as Swift, and whom circumstances had placed in a very uncommon situation with respect to Stella on the one hand, and Vanessa on the other. An argument which sets out by obliging us to believe nothing with respect to Swift irreconcilable with the "common rules" from which he claimed emancipation for "nobler minds," would either prove that Vanessa and Stella had never existed, or that Swift had never placed himself, with respect to these ladies, in the painful predicament which seems to have broken the heart of both, and to have gone far to breaking his own. Mr. Monck Mason's opinion is thus stated.

"Notwithstanding Dr. Delany's sentiments of Swift's marriage,

Digitized by Google

went to Archbishop King, to mention his apprehensions. On entering the library, Swift rushed out with a countenance of distraction, and passed him without speak-

and notwithstanding all that Lord Orrery and others have said about it, there is no authority for it but a hear-say story, and that very ill founded. It is certain that the Dean told one of his friends, whom he advised to marry, that he himself never wished to marry at the time he ought to have entered into that state; for he counted upon it as the happiest condition, especially towards the decline of life, when a faithful, tender friend, is most wanted. While he was talking to this effect, his friend expressed his wishes to have seen him married: the Dean asked why? 'Because,' replied the other, 'I should have had the pleasure of seeing your offspring; all the world would have been pleased to have seen the issue of such a genius.' The Dean smiled, and denied his being married, in the same manner as before, and said he never saw the woman he wished to be married to. The same gentleman, who was intimate with Mrs. Dingley for ten years before she died, in 1743, took occasion to tell her that such a story was whispered of her friend Mrs. Johnson's marriage with the Dean, but she only laughed at it as an idle tale, founded only on suspicion. Again, Mrs. Brent, with whom the Dean's mother used to lodge in Dublin, in the queen's time, and who was his own housekeeper after he settled in Dublin in 1714, and who, for her many good qualities in that situation, was much confided in, never did believe there was a marriage between those persons, notwithstanding all that love and fondness that subsisted between them: she thought it was all platonic love, and she often told her daughter Ridgeway so, who succeeded her in the same office of housekeeper. She said that Mrs. Johnson never came alone to the deanery, that Mrs. Dingley and she came always together, and that she never slept in that house if the Dean was there, only in time of his sickness, to attend him, and see him well taken care of; and during this course of her generous attendance, Mrs. Dingley and she slept together, and, as soon as he recovered, they returned to their lodgings on Ormond-quay. These ladies slept, two other times, at the deanery, at an * * * * pleasant house, and near his garden called Naboth's vineyard, and that was for those months in 1726 and 1727 which he spent in England. It chanced that she was taken ill at the deanery, and it added much to his affliction that it happened at the deanery, for fear of defamation in case of her dying in his house, whether he was at home or abroad. Had he been married, he could not have lived in a state of separation from her, he loved her so passionately; for he admired her upon every account that can make a woman amiable or valuable as a companion for life. Is it possible to think that an affectionate husband could first have written, and then have used, those several prayers, by a dying wife with whom he never cohabited, and whose mouth must have been filled with reproaches for denying her all conjugal rites for a number of years, nay, from the very period (1716) that is pretended to be

Digitized by Google

ing. He found the Archbishop in tears, and upon asking the reason, he said, "You have just met the most unhappy man on earth; but on the subject of his wretchedness, you must never ask a question."* Swift seclud-

the time of the marriage? Would he have suffered his wife to make a will, signed Esther Johnson, and to demise 1500*l.* away from him, of which 1000*l.* is enjoyed by the chaplain of Stevens's hospital for the sick, and accept of a gold watch only, as a testimony of her regard for him?—If he could direct, or rather command her, to leave her fortune as he pleased, it is probable he would have directed the application towards the future support of lunatics, which was the species of charity he thought most worthy the attention of the public. Is it not probable that two gentlemen of honour and fortune, still living, who knew them both intimately, and who were her executors, would have known of a marriage, if there was one? And yet they always did, and do positively declare, they never had cause to suspect they were married, although they were in company with both one thousand times; they saw proof of the warmest friendship, and any love but connubial love. If she made him a present of a book, you may read in the title-page these words—and so he distinguished every book she gave him:

Esther Johnson's gift to
Jonathan Swift—1719.

Would he deny his marriage with a woman of good fortune at that time, when he says 'she had a gracefulness somewhat more than human, in every motion, word, and action?'"

The reader must judge of the force of this reasoning, compared with the circumstances brought together in the text, and form the best opinion which he can upon an event which, take it either way, is enveloped in mystery and inconsistency.

* It is proper to state, that Delany's inference from this circumstance, was a suspicion that Swift, after his union with Stella, had discovered that there was too near a consanguinity between them, to admit of their living together, and that he had then been stating the circumstance to the Archbishop. But it does not appear that the words used by the prelate necessarily indicated a connexion of this kind, and there are positive proofs that none such could possibly exist. The connexion was supposed to depend upon Sir William Temple, of whom the legend pronounced both Swift and Stella to be illegitimate children. It is needless to dwell upon the improbability that such a relationship should have been a secret to both parties, during their intimacy of so many years, and yet should all at once have become known to them upon their marriage in Ireland, when their parents were dead, and when they were at a distance from all persons who could be supposed the confidants of Sir William Temple's intrigues. It is enough to say, that Swift's parents resided in Ireland from before 1665, until his birth, in 1667, and that Temple was residing, as ambassador in Holland, from April 1666, until January 1668. As for Stella, her mother being introduced into Sir William Temple's family, after her husband's death,

Digitized by Google

ed himself from society for some days. When he reappeared, his intercourse with Stella and Mrs. Dingley was reassumed, with the same guarded and cautious attention, to prevent the slightest suspicion of a more intimate union with the former, as if such intimacy had not now been legal and virtuous. Stella, therefore, continued the beloved and intimate friend of Swift; the regulator of his household and table on public days, although she only appeared there as an ordinary guest; the companion of his social hours, and his comforter in sickness;—but his wife only in name, and even that nominal union a secret from the world. Thus situated, Stella continued to experience, in some degree, the inconveniences attached to a situation so doubtful; for though she was known to several ladies, yet their intercourse was rather formal than friendly, and her intimacies lay entirely with Swift's male friends. The obliging friend of Mrs. Delany,* whom I have already mentioned, says, that Stella "went with Mrs. Dingley to Dr. Delany's villa on Wednesdays, when his men-companions dined, before he was married to my friend. She (Mrs. Delany) once saw her by accident, and was struck with the beauty of her countenance, and particularly with her fine dark eyes. She was very pale, and looked pensive, but not melancholy, and had hair black as a raven." This slight sketch of Stella, from the recollection of the venerable Mrs. Delany, will probably interest the reader as much as the Editor.†

by the compassionate friendship of Lady Gifford, there is every reason to suppose, that she was never even seen by Temple, until the future wife of Swift was two or three years old. We must, therefore, seek some other reasons for Swift's distress, and the expressions of King, than the construction assigned to them by Delany.

* When I say that the lady from whom I have this information is equally distinguished for high rank, eminent talents, and the soundest judgment, I regret, as much as Mr. Mason can do, that a dislike on her part to any thing approaching to appearance before the public, prevents me from adding her name.—See *History of Saint Patrick's.*

† The only portrait of Stella known to exist, is in possession of my kind and respected friend, the Rev. Mr. Berwick. Dr. Tuke of St. Stephen's Green has a lock of her hair, on the envelope of which

Digitized by Google

If flattery and fame could have made up for domestic happiness, Stella might have been satisfied. Every year, on her birth-day, the Dean addressed her in a copy of verses, in which the most elegant compliments were bestowed with an affectation of bluntness, which seemed only to warrant for their sincerity.* But they contain frequent insinuations of angry passions, and virtues which

> ——— Suspended wait,
> Till time has open'd reason's gate.

Hints which too plainly imply, that their unsatisfactory state of union neither lulled jealousy nor resentment to silence. These complaints of Stella's temper occur most frequently in the poems which precede the death of Vanessa, and the reason is sufficiently apparent. Under the impression of such feelings, she is said to have composed the following lines:†

ON JEALOUSY.

"O shield me from his rage, celestial Powers!
This tyrant that embitters all my hours.
Ah Love! you've poorly play'd the hero's part;
You conquer'd, but you can't defend my heart.
When first I bent beneath your gentle reign,
I thought this monster banish'd from your train:
But you would raise him to support your throne,
And now he claims your empire as his own;
Or tell me, tyrants, have you both agreed
That where one reigns, the other shall succeed?"

The mind pauses on this mysterious story, with an anxious wish to ascertain its secret causes: and though time and death have destroyed the perfect clew to the labyrinth, a few speculations may be hazarded from the facts, so far as they are ascertained. The reasons al-

is written, in Dean Swift's hand—"Only a woman's hair."—If Stella was dead, as is most probable, when Swift laid apart this memorial, the motto is an additional instance of his striving to veil the most bitter feelings under the guise of cynical indifference.

* Swift's Works, Vol. XIV. p. 502, *et seq.*

† I say *said* to have composed, because there is room to suppose Stella received assistance (from Delany probably) both in these, and the much more beautiful verses addressed to Swift on his birth-day. Swift's Works, Vol. XIV. p. 514.

Digitized by Google

leged by Swift himself for the extraordinary conditions which he attached to his marriage, seem merely ostensible; at least they are such as never influenced any reasonable being in the same situation; for they resolve into a desire to conceal from the world his having had the weakness to break two private resolutions concerning matrimony, of which resolutions the world could know nothing. Terror for the effects the news of his marriage might produce on the irritable feelings of Vanessa, and a consciousness that his long concealment of the circumstances which led to it, placed his conduct towards her in a culpable point of view, must be allowed as one chief motive for the secrecy enjoined upon Stella. This dread would be increased to anguish, if we supposed that he married Mrs. Johnson to satisfy his own honour, and her conscience, while his heart was secretly devoted to her rival. But had such been the only cause of his distress of mind, and of the injunctions of secrecy laid upon Stella, that secrecy would have ceased to be necessary, after Vanessa was no more. A struggle there might have been between his pride and his affection; but it seems reasonable to suppose that the latter would have been victor, where the former had so little to support it. There remains a conjecture which can only be intimated, but which, if correct, will explain much of Swift's peculiar conduct in his intercourse with the female sex. During that period of life when the passions are most violent, Swift boasts of his "cold temper." Since that time, the continual recurrence of a distressing vertigo was gradually undermining his health. It seems, in these circumstances, probable, that the continence which he observed, may have been owing to physical, as well as moral causes. Were such the case, he might seek the society of Vanessa, without the apprehension of exciting passions, to which he was himself insensible; and his separation from Stella, after marriage, might be a matter equally of choice, or of necessity. This much, at least, is certain, that if, according to a saying which Swift highly approved, desire produces love in man, we cannot find any one line in Swift's writings or correspondence, intimating his hav-

Digitized by Google

ing felt such a spurce of passion;* nor indeed is there a single anecdote of his life recorded, which indicates his having submitted to what he irreverently terms "that ridiculous passion which has no being but in play-books or romances."† In his youth he sought female society merely as a relaxation from unpleasant thoughts, and from Stella and Vanessa he seems, at a later period, to have required no other proof of affection than the pleasures of intimate friendship, enlivened by female wit, and softened by female sensibility. The qualities for which he extols both his celebrated favourites are uniformly mental, and not only so, but such as are rather of a masculine character, as courage, frankness, constancy, and sincerity; rather than delicacy, sensibility, and ardour of affection. In short, he praises in his female friends those attributes chiefly which are most frequently met with in the other sex, and appears embarrassed, rather than gratified, by the superior ardour of passion with which his temperate predilection was returned. He has himself characterized his affection for Vanessa as void of passion:

> "His conduct might have made him styled
> A father, and the nymph his child.
> That innocent delight he took
> To see the virgin mind her book,
> Was but the master's secret joy
> In school to hear the finest boy."

And Stella he has thus addressed:

> "Thou, Stella, wert no longer young,
> When first for thee my harp I strung;
> Without one word of Cupid's darts,
> Of killing eyes, or bleeding hearts:
> With friendship and esteem possest,
> I ne'er admitted love a guest."

* The sense of decency which uniformly gave way before the slightest temptation to exercise his wit, would scarce have restrained him from expressing voluptuous, as well as disgusting ideas; and that he has no where done so, but uniformly expatiated on those of an opposite tendency, is perhaps the strongest confirmation of the conjecture expressed in the text.

† Swift's Works, Vol. IX. p. 214.

‡ From the following lines a different inference might be drawn.

Digitized by Google

If such was the goal of his expectations and hopes, he may have considered his regard for Vanessa, as no breach of his faith to Stella, until taught by the unrestrained declaration of the former, as well as by their mutual rivalry, that the coldness of his own temper had prevented him from estimating the force of passion in those who became his victims.*

After his marriage with Stella, Swift seems to have redoubled his anxiety to moderate the passion of Vanessa into friendship, or to give it, if possible, a new direc-

But although signed with the initials of the celebrated Drapier, I do not believe they came from his pen.

INSCRIBED IN STELLA'S PRAYER BOOK.

When, dearest maid! with heavenly zeal possess'd,
In thy fair hand these pious leaves are press'd;
While thy soft eyes devotion's glances wear;
And thy dear lips repeat the affecting prayer,
Would'st thou Heaven's pity to thy suit incline,
Oh! by its pity learn, and answer mine. M. B.

From the Gentleman's Magazine, Vol. VIII. for March 1738, p. 155.

* It must not be suppressed, that Mr. Monck Berkeley mentions, with some hesitation, a report, which, if true, would totally destroy the hypothesis in the text, although supported by the opinion of Sheridan. Richard Brennan, the servant in whose arms Swift breathed his last, informed Mr. Berkeley, that, when he was at school, there was a boy boarded there, who was commonly reported to be the Dean's son, by Mrs. Johnson. He added, that the boy dined at the Deanery on Sundays, and was permitted to amuse himself in the Deanery yard, and that he died soon after Mrs. Johnson. Enquiry into Swift's life, p. xxxvi. Admitting there may have been such a boy, and that he met with kindness from the Dean, the inference is only that drawn by a witness from the lowest and most prejudiced of the common people, and is totally opposite to all which is recorded of Swift and Stella, by the numerous intelligent, and doubtless inquisitive persons by whom they were surrounded. In one of the letters to Mr. Tickell, which are now for the first time published, Swift himself bears a curious testimony to the distance which was maintained between him and Stella. It is dated 7th July 1726, ten years after their marriage: "I wonder how you could expect to see her in a morning, which I, her oldest acquaintance, have not done these dozen years, except once or twice in a journey." Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 290. To other improbabilities may be added, that so proud a man as Swift should provide no otherwise for his only child, than to board him in a school, where so mean a person as Richard Brennan was a scholar.

Digitized by Google

tion. The secret husband of another, he could not but be conscious how ill it became him to remain the object of such ardent affection. He introduced to her notice Dean Winter, a gentleman of character and fortune, as a candidate for her hand; but she rejected the proposal in the most peremptory manner. She was also unsuccessfully addressed by Dr. Price, afterwards archbishop of Cashell. At length, about the year 1717, she retired from Dublin to her house and property near Celbridge, to nurse her hopeless passion in seclusion from the world. Swift seems to have foreseen and warned her against the consequences of this step. His letters uniformly exhort her to seek general society, to take exercise, and to divert, as much as possible, the current of her thoughts from the unfortunate subject which was preying upon her spirits. He even exhorts her to leave Ireland. But these admonitions are mingled with expressions of tenderness, greatly too warm not to come from the heart, and too strong to be designed merely to soothe the unfortunate recluse. Until the year 1720, he never appears to have visited her at Celbridge; they only met when she was occasionally in Dublin. But in that year, and down to the time of her death, Swift came repeatedly to Celbridge; and, from the information of a most obliging correspondent, I am enabled to give an account of some minute particulars attending them.

Marley Abbey, near Celbridge, where Miss Vanhomrigh resided, is built much in the form of a real cloister, especially in its external appearance. An aged man (upwards of ninety by his own account) showed the grounds to my correspondent. He was the son of Mrs. Vanhomrigh's gardener, and used to work with his father in the garden when a boy. He remembered the unfortunate Vanessa well, and his account of her corresponded with the usual description of her person, especially as to her *embonpoint*. He said she went seldom abroad, and saw little company: her constant amusement was reading, or walking in the garden. Yet, according to this authority, her society was courted by several families in the neighbourhood, who visited her,

Digitized by Google

notwithstanding her seldom returning that attention; and he added, that her manners interested every one who knew her. But she avoided company, and was always melancholy, save when Dean Swift was there, and then she seemed happy. The garden was to an uncommon degree crowded with laurels. The old man said, that when Miss Vanhomrigh expected the Dean, she always planted, with her own hand, a laurel or two against his arrival. He showed her favourite seat, still called Vanessa's Bower. Three or four trees, and some laurels, indicate the spot. They had formerly, according to the old man's information, been trained in into a close arbour. There were two seats and a rude table within the bower, the opening of which commanded a view of the Liffey, which had a romantic effect, and there was a small cascade that murmured at some distance. In this sequestered spot, according to the old gardener's account, the Dean and Vanessa used often to sit, with books and writing-materials on the table before them. And the verses composed among such objects, by that unfortunate lady, will perhaps help us to guess at the subject of their classical interviews.

AN ODE TO SPRING.

HAIL, blushing goddess, beauteous Spring,
Who in thy jocund train dost bring
Loves and Graces, smiling hours,
Balmy breezes, fragrant flowers,
Come, with tints of roseate hue,
Nature's faded charms renew.
Yet why should I thy presence hail?
To me no more the breathing gale
Comes fraught with sweets, no more the rose
With such transcendent beauty blows,
As when Cadenus blest the scene,
And shared with me those joys serene.
When, unperceived, the lambent fire
Of Friendship kindled new desire;
Still listening to his tuneful tongue,
The truths which angels might have sung,
Divine imprest their gentle sway,
And sweetly stole my soul away.
My guide, instructer, lover, friend,
(Dear names!) in one idea blend;
O! still conjoin'd, your incense rise,
And waft sweet odours to the skies.

Digitized by Google

AN ODE TO WISDOM.

O PALLAS! I invoke thy aid!
Vouchsafe to hear a wretched maid,
  By tender love deprest;
'Tis just that thou should'st heal the smart
Inflicted by thy subtle art,
  And calm my troubled breast.

No random shot from Cupid's bow,
But by thy guidance, soft and slow,
  It sunk within my heart;
Thus, Love being arm'd with Wisdom's force,
In vain I try to stop its course,
  In vain repel the dart.

O Goddess! break the fatal league,
Let Love, with Folly and Intrigue,
  More fit associates find!
And thou alone, within my breast,
O! deign to soothe my griefs to rest,
  And heal my tortured mind.

Vanessa, besides musing over her unhappy attachment, had, during her residence in this solitude, the care of nursing the declining health of her younger sister, who at length died about 1720. This event, as it left her alone in the world, seems to have increased the energy of her fatal passion for Swift, while he, on the contrary, saw room for still greater reserve, when her situation became that of a solitary female, without the society or countenance of a female relation. But Miss Vanhomrigh, irritated at the situation in which she found herself, determined on bringing to a crisis those expectations of an union with the object of her affections, to the hope of which she had clung amid every vicissitude of his conduct towards her. The most probable bar was his undefined connexion with Mrs. Johnson, which, as it must have been perfectly known to her, had, doubtless, long excited her secret jealousy: although only a single hint to that purpose is to be found in their correspondence, and that so early as 1713, when she writes to him, then in Ireland, "If you are very happy, it is ill-natured of you not to tell me so, *except 'tis what is inconsistent with mine.*" Her silence and patience under this state of uncertainty, for no less than

Digitized by Google

eight years, must have been partly owing to her awe for Swift, and partly perhaps to the weak state of her rival's health, which, from year to year, seemed to announce speedy dissolution. At length, however, Vanessa's impatience prevailed, and she ventured on the decisive step of writing to Mrs. Johnson herself, requesting to know the nature of that connexion. Stella, in reply, informed her of her marriage with the Dean; and, full of the highest resentment against Swift for having given another female such a right in him as Miss Vanhomrigh's enquiries implied, she sent to him her rival's letter of interrogation, and, without seeing him, or awaiting his reply, retired to the house of Mr. Ford, near Dublin. Every reader knows the consequence. Swift, in one of those paroxysms of fury to which he was liable, both from temper and disease, rode instantly to Marley Abbey. As he entered the apartment, the sternness of his countenance, which was peculiarly formed to express the fiercer passions, struck the unfortunate Vanessa with such terror, that she could scarce ask whether he would not sit down. He answered by flinging a letter on the table, and, instantly leaving the house, mounted his horse and returned to Dublin. When Vanessa opened the packet, she only found her own letter to Stella. It was her death-warrant. She sunk at once under the disappointment of the delayed, yet cherished hopes, which had so long sickened her heart, and beneath the unrestrained wrath of him for whose sake she had indulged them. How long she survived this last interview is uncertain, but the time does not seem to have exceeded a few weeks. In the meanwhile, she revoked a will made in favour of Swift, and settled her fortune, which was considerable, upon Mr. Marshal, afterwards one of the judges of the Court of Common Pleas in Ireland, and Dr. Berkeley, the celebrated philosopher, afterwards Bishop of Cloyne.* A remarkable condition is said to have accompanied her

* Dr. Berkeley had been known to the Vanhomrigh family in London, by the introduction of Swift, but had not seen Miss Esther Vanhomrigh since she came to Ireland. Her succession amounted to about eight thousand pounds.

Digitized by Google

bequest: that her executors, namely, should make public all the letters which had passed between the testator and Swift, as well as the celebrated poem of Cadenus and Vanessa. It is said that Berkeley, from friendship to Swift, and Marshal, influenced by Berkeley's opinion, or perhaps dreading to bring on himself the displeasure of the celebrated satirist, resolved to disobey this injunction; and every biographer of Swift has hitherto recorded either the apology or censure of Vanessa's executors. But the truth is, that Miss Vanhomrigh's will contains no such injunction, so that if it at all existed, it must have been delivered in a manner and at a time when Berkeley, honourable and virtuous as he was, felt himself entitled to dispense with obeying it. He probably thought, that giving publicity to the romantic expressions of Vanessa's passion, could only gratify idle or malignant curiosity, exasperate the sufferings of Swift, which were already beyond endurance, and perhaps expose to evil construction the reputation of his benefactress. Such might be the reasoning of Berkeley, supposing that Vanessa really enjoined this extraordinary posthumous revenge. But as the report, however uniform, is certainly inaccurate in ascribing a place to such a condition in Vanessa's will, it may be well doubted whether it is better founded in the general point of its existence.

Bishop Berkeley is said to have destroyed the original letters of this celebrated correspondence. But a full copy remained in possession of Judge Marshal, and, after his death, some mutilated extracts found their way to the public. By the friendship of Mr. Berwick, the editor is enabled to fill up this curious desideratum in Swift's correspondence, which gives him the more pleasure, as any sinister interpretation of the former imperfect extracts, which, as was natural, were taken from those passages that expressed most warmth of passion, will be in a great measure confuted by the entire publication. The tone of feeling is lowered by the context, and those passages, which, taken by themselves, might appear suspicious, especially while what was suppressed was left to imagination, are much modified,

Digitized by Google

when restored to their place among grave maxims of advice, and trifling passages of humour. At any rate, all from which any inference, favourable or unfavourable, can be deduced, is now at length before the public. There are no fragments produced, from which suspicions may be excited, and no blanks remain to be filled up by the suggestions of detraction. If the correspondence proves less interesting than the reader might have expected, the admirers of Swift will be gratified with the confutation which the letters afford of the evil reports first propagated by Lord Orrery.

The sum of the evidence which they afford seems to amount to this,—that while residing in England for years, and at a distance from Stella, Swift incautiously engaged in a correspondence with Miss Vanhomrigh, which probably at first meant little more than mere gallantry, since the mother, brother, and sister, seem all to have been confidants of their intimacy. After his journey to Ireland, his letters assume a graver cast, and consist rather of advice, caution, and rebuke, than expressions of tenderness. Yet neither his own heart, nor the nature of Vanessa's violent attachment, permit him to suppress strong, though occasional and rare indications of the high regard in which he held her, although honour, friendship, and esteem, had united his fate with that of another. It would perhaps have been better, had their amours never become public; as that has, however, happened, it is the biographer's duty to throw such light upon them, as Mr. Berwick's friendship has enabled him to do; in order that Swift's conduct, weak and blameable as it must be held in this instance, may at least not suffer hereafter, from being seen under false or imperfect lights.

Although the letters were suppressed, Cadenus and Vanessa was given to the world soon after Miss Vanhomrigh's death. In this extraordinary poem, it seems to have been the intention of the author to soothe the passion which the unfortunate Miss Vanhomrigh was unable to subdue. One passage in it has given rise to inferences yet more fatal to Swift's character than can be deduced from the preceding narrative, or the

Digitized by Google

perusal of the correspondence between the lovers. It begins with the well-known lines,—

> But what success Vanessa met,
> Is to the world a secret yet, &c.

To what purpose these lines were introduced, whether from Swift's usual vein of humour, which never could resist a jest, or whether they were meant jocularly to intimate the danger attending the intimacy between Cadenus and Vanessa, it were in vain to enquire. But to brand Swift as a seducer, and Miss Vanhomrigh as his victim, on account of a single passage, not only detached, but, if interpreted in so sinister a manner, at variance with all the rest of the poem, requires the cold-blooded ingenuity of Lord Orrery. Every other line of the poem ascribes to Vanessa a passion, which had virtue for its foundation and object; and a similar picture is exhibited in the following lines, addressed by Swift to Vanessa, long after the date of his celebrated poem:—

> Nymph, would you learn the only art
> To keep a worthy lover's heart:
> First, to adorn your person well,
> In utmost cleanliness excel:
> And though you must the fashions take,
> Observe them but for fashion's sake;
> The strongest reason will submit
> To virtue, honour, sense, and wit:
> To such a nymph, the wise and good
> Cannot be faithless, if they would;
> For vices all have different ends,
> But virtue still to virtue tends:
> And when your lover is not true,
> 'Tis virtue fails in him, or you.
> And either he deserves disdain,
> Or you without a cause complain.
> But here Vanessa cannot err,
> Nor are these rules applied to her,
> For who could such a nymph forsake,
> Except a blockhead or a rake?
> Or how could she her heart bestow,
> Except where wit and virtue grow?

The letters of Miss Vanhomrigh preserve the same tone, and plead, in extenuation of her uncontrollable

Digitized by Google

affection, the high moral character of its object. The reproaches, too, which they occasionally contain, are uniformly of coldness, not of desertion; nor do her expostulations, like those of a forsaken paramour, upbraid her lover with the wreck of her fame and virtue, in the tone of Virgil's deserted heroine:—

> ——————— Te propter eundem,
> Extinctus pudor et quâ solâ sidera adibam,
> Fama prior———————

On the contrary, Swift, under Vanessa's pen remains a matchless model of virtue, just and perfect in every thing, but in want of tenderness: the picture, in short, usually drawn by a male lover of his relentless mistress. It is the language of the most romantic attachment, but without the least tincture of criminal desire. Nay, in allusion, doubtless, to her rash declaration, she seems to take to herself, as the cause of their distress, those reproaches, which she was sensible she had no cause to impute to the perfidy of her lover. "Oh," she exclaims, "how have you forgot me! You endeavour by severities to force me from you, nor can I blame you; for, with the utmost distress and confusion, I behold myself the cause of uneasy reflections to you. Yet I cannot comfort you, but here declare, that 'tis not in the power of time or accident, to lessen the inexpressible passion which I have for ———." This remarkable and decisive passage proves, that it was the unrequited passion of Vanessa, not the perfidy of Cadenus, which was the origin of their mutual misery; for she states Swift's unhappiness as arising from her love, and declares herself at the same time incapable of abating her affection. Enough of blame will remain with Swift, if we allow that he cherished with indecisive yet flattering hope, a passion which, in justice to himself and Vanessa, he ought, at whatever risk to her feelings and his own, to have repressed as soon as she declared it. The want of firmness which this conduct required, made every hour of indecision an act of real cruelty, though under the mask of mercy, and while it trained

Digitized by Google

his victim towards the untimely grave which it prepared, ruined at the same time his own peace of mind.*

Upon the death of Miss Vanhomrigh, Swift, in an agony of self-reproach and remorse, retreated into the south of Ireland, where he spent two months, without the place of his abode being known to any one. When he returned to Dublin, Stella was easily persuaded to forgive him, judging, probably, that the anguish he had sustained, was a sufficient expiation for an offence

* It is singular that another female appears to have been inspired with a violent passion for Swift's person, in consequence of admiring his talents. The following "distracted scroll," as the writer well terms it, is literally copied from the anonymous original among Mr. Smith's papers.

FROM SACHARISA TO ———

Thursday Morning, Four o'clock.

If I was not thoroughly convinced that the author of this distracted scroll will for ever be sunk in oblivion, I would choose death in any shape, before I would reveal the continual anguish I have suffered, even before I saw your godlike form; for believe me, my passion first got birth by perusing your inimitable writings.

If women were allowed to speak their thoughts, I would glory in my choice, and spread your fame (if possible) further than these narrow limits of the earth.

'Tis my misfortune to be in the care of persons who generally keep youth under such restraint, as won't permit them to publish their passion though never so violent, and such I must confess mine for you to be. Could you conceive the many pangs, the many different pangs I feel, I flatter myself you would lighten the insupportable burthen of my love, by generously bearing a part. When I consider to whom I speak, that 'tis to the divine, immortal Swift, I am confounded at my vanity; but, alas! the malignity of my disorder is so great, that my love soon gets the better of the regard and homage I render even to his name; but certain it is, if you don't flatter this absurd but sincere passion of mine, I must expect death as the just reward of my presumption; and be assured if it were any but yourself, I would cheerfully suffer that, before I would have my passion returned with disdain, and as I expect no other from you, beg you'll publish it in Faulkner's Journal, under what fictitious name you please; for if I have the least understanding I shall distinguish your writings (under ever so many disadvantages) from any other: (inscribe it to Sacharisa) you may easily imagine with what impatience I shall expect Friday; I can't add how much I am yours till the arrival of my doom.

SACHARISA.

Digitized by Google

which was now irremediable. We turn with pleasure from this painful but necessary detail, to trace Swift's occupation from the time of his settlement in Ireland, in 1714-15, till his first appearance as an Irish patriot, in 1723.

The business of the cathedral employed, doubtless, a considerable part of his leisure, embroiled as it was for some time by the resistance of his chapter, and the unfriendly interference of Archbishop King. But prejudices against the Dean wore off, as the rectitude of his intentions, and his disinterested zeal for the rights and welfare of the church, became more and more evident. He soon obtained such authority in his chapter, that what he proposed was seldom disputed; after which, the business of leases and renewals, consulting old records, and compiling new ones, could not occupy any great portion of his time. There is every reason to believe, that, during these five or six years, Swift dedicated many hours to study. Herodotus, Philostratus, and Aulus Gellius, seem particularly to have engaged his attention, as he has written his opinion concerning each of them in the blank leaves of the volume.* While

* For his character of Herodotus, dated 6th July 1729, see his Works, Vol. IX. p. 273. From a Paris edit. of Philostratus, 1608, Mr. Theophilus Swift copied the following note from the Dean's autograph. "In hoc libro, nugis, portentis, ac mendaciis undique scatente, nonpauca sparsim inveniet lector, nec illepida nec inutilia: quæ autem mihi maxime arriserunt, ea punctulis quibusdam ad marginem appositis annotavi. Nov. 8, 1715. Jon. Swift." The passages marked are but few.

The Dean's copy of Aulus Gellius, edited by Gronovius, An. 1706, was in the possession of the late Mr. Theophilus Swift, and is now in that of E. L. Swift, Esquire. It bears the following inscription, in the hand-writing of Erasmus Lewis. "Beneficium dando accepit qui Digno dedit. E. L." To which the Dean subjoins, "Donum Amici, de me optime meriti, Erasm. Lewis. April 10, 1712." On a blank leaf occurs the following character of the work, given, as it appears, upon a second perusal.

"Post longum temporis intervallum, secundâ vice perlegi hunc librum; et certè, mediante Fortuna, consultum optimè videtur autoris famæ, quod excerptis abundat e libris jamdiu deperditis, et quod lingua Latina apud annos M. manet in pretio. Supponamus enim hodiernum aliquem Scriptorem, Gallicum putà, Italicum vel Anglicanum, centones undique conrasos vernaculè scriptos in

Digitized by Google

such were his studies, we cannot suppose that the more pleasing paths of classical learning were neglected, even if we had not learned that the study of Lucretius was a favourite amusement during his residence at Gaulstown. But a list of books in his library, marked with his own manuscript remarks, affords the most authentic record of his taste in reading.*

volumen congessisse, et critica quædam adjutâsse in nonnulla vocabula cujusque linguæ; certè nil concipi possit futilius aut ineptius: Opus igitur aliquanti æstimo, autorem nihili."

"Quod ad commentatorem Gronovium attinet, magni nominis (ut dicitur) in hujusce generis eruditione: cave temerè speres ab eo lucem in difficultatibus enodandis; totum enim tempus insumit vel variantes lectiones confundendo, vel lectorem ad alios autores referendo; vel denique Oisellium quendam convitiis insectando.

"Nov. 1, 1719." "J. SWIFT.

* This list is extracted from

"A Catalogue of Books, the Library of the late Rev. Dr. Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin. To be sold by auction. The time and place for the sale of them will be inserted in the Dublin Journal.—N.B. The books marked thus* have remarks and observations on them in the hand of Dr. Swift. Dublin, printed for George Faulkner, in Essex-street, 1745, 8vo."

OCTAVO ET INFRA.

3 Memoirs de la Minorité de Louis XIV. Villefranche, 1690.
24 Virgilii Poemata, cum Scholiis H. Stephani. Cura Pau. Steph. 1599.
25 Boetii Consolationes Philosophiæ, cum notis Vallini. Lugd. Bat. 1656.
26 Vidæ Poemata. Oxon. 1701.
28 Justini Historia, cum emendationibus Jan. Fabri. Salmur, 1671.
33 Valerii Maximi Dicta et Facta memorabilia, cum notis Lipsii. Amsterdam, 1647.
42 Rabelais, ses Œuvres. Lyon, 1558.
43 Eutropius et Paulus Diaconus de Gestis Romanis, cum annot. Eliæ Veneti. Paris, 1564.
46 Taciti Opera. Amsterdam, 1649.
65 Bernier, ses Voyages. Amsterdam, 1699, 2 tomes.

FOLIO.

78 Platonis Opera, Gr. Lat. cum comment. Jo. Serrani. Cura Hen. Stephani. 1578, 3 vol.
81 Xenophontis Opera, Gr. Lat. cum notis; Studio Leunclavii et Porti. Paris, 1625.
83 Philostrati Lemnii Opera, Gr. L. studio Fed. Morelli. Paris, 1608.
91 Strabonis Geographia, Gr. Lat. studio Casauboni et Xylandri. Paris, 1620.

Digitized by Google

These studies, however, were unequal to occupy the spare time which Dublin gave to Swift after his constant

92 Herodoti Historia, Gr. Lat. studio Vallæ et Sylburgii. Cura Pauli Stephani, 1618.
94 Suidas Lexicon, Gr. Lat. studio Æm. Porti. Col. All. 1619. 2 vol.
95 Dionis Cassii Romana Historia, Gr. L. studio Xylandri. Cura Hen. Steph.
105 Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores sex, cum notis, studio Claud. Salmasii. Paris, 1620.

OCTAVO ET INFRA.

111 Satyre Menippée de la Vertu du Catholicon d'Espagne. 1621.
115 Jollyvet, ses Poesies Chretiennes. Utrecht, 1700.
132 Boileau, ses Œuvres. Amsterdam, 1697, 2 vol.

QUARTO.

202 Hobbes Opera Philosophica. Amst. 1668, 2 vol.
215 Auli Gellii Noctes Atticæ, cum notis; studio Frederici et Gronovii. Lugd. Bat. 1706.
223 Antiquæ Musicæ Auctores, Gr. Lat. cum notis. Meibomi. Elzev. Amst. 1652, 1 & 2 vol.
228 Anthologia Epigrammata Græcorum. Cura Hen. Stephan. 1566.

FOLIO.

238 Earl of Clarendon, his History of the Grand Rebellion. Oxford, 1707, 3 vol. large paper.
255 Hobbes his Leviathan, or Matter and Form of a Commonwealth. London, 1651.

OCTAVO ET INFRA.

276 Child, his Discourse on Trade. London, 1693.
302 Marvel, the Rehearsal transposed. Lond. 1672.
309 La Bruyere, Les Caractères ou les Mœurs de ce Siècle, avec le Clef, Tome I. et II. et Ouvrage dans le gout de Theophraste et de Pascal. Amst. 1697.

QUARTO.

336 Horatii Opera, ad fidem optimorum exemplarium. Cantab. 1699.
337 Virgilii Opera, ad fidem optim. exemp. *ib.* 1701.
338 Terentii Comœdiæ, ad fidem optim. exemp. *ib.* 1701.
340 Doctor Gibbs's Translation of the Psalms, with Dr. Swift's jests upon it. Lond. 1701.

FOLIO.

361 Procopii Arcana Historia, Gr. Lat. cum notis, studio Alemanni. Lugd. Bat. 1623.
363 Nieuhovii Legatio Batavica ad Magnum Tartariæ Chamum, Latine, per Geo. Hornium. Amst. 1668.
364 Nostradamus's true Prophecies, commented by Theoph. Garencieres. London, 1672.
365 Philip de Comines, his History, translated by Tho. Danett. *ib.* 1614.
366 Herbert, *Edw. Lord*, Life of King Henry VIII. *ib.* 1649.

Digitized by Google

labour in the politics of London. It has been generally thought, and with great probability, that the outline of

367 Polybii Opera, Gr. Lat. cum comment. studio Casauboni. Et Æneas de Obsidione tolerando, Gr. Lat. studio ejusdem. Paris, 1609.
369 Epiphani Episcopi Constant. Opus contra Hæreses. Basil, 1545.
374 Machiavel's Works. London, 1695.
375 Burnet, *Thomas*, his Theory of the Earth. *ib.* 1697.
377 Lawd's Relation of his Conference with Fisher. *ib.* 1639.
378 Herbert, *Thomas*, his Travels. *Ibid.* 1634.
381 Harrington's Commonwealth of Oceana. *Ibid.* 1656.
382 Meursii Historia Danica et Belgica. Amst. 1638.
383 Helvici Theatrum Histor. et Chronologicum. Oxon. 1651.
384 Livii Historia Romana, cum annot. variorum. Paris, 1625.
385 Isocratis Opera, Gr. Lat. cum annot. studio Hier. Wolfii. Basil, 1570.

OCTAVO ET INFRA.

419 Doleman's Conference about the next Succession. Lond. 1681.
420 Proceedings of the House of Commons, in impeaching the Earl of Clarendon. 1700.
431 Hale, *Sir Matthew*, History of the Common Law of England. Savoy, 1713.
447 Cotton's Virgil's Travestie. Dublin, 1728.
449 Tasso's Recovery of Jerusalem, by Fairfax. Dublin, 1726.
465 Garth's Dispensary. London, 1699.
482 Miscellanies in Prose and Verse, by Dr. Swift and Mr. Pope. Lond. 1727, 4 vol.
486 Dr. Swift's Works. Dublin, 1734, &c. 6 vol.
492 Dr. Swift's Gulliver's Travels. London, 1726, 2 vol. large paper.

QUARTO.

507 Speeches in the Parliament met 3d Nov. 1640. Lond. 1641.
513 Select Epistles of Horace, translated, imperfect.
514 L'Estrange's Dissenters' Sayings, and other Pamphlets. Lond. 1681, &c.
519 Pope's Works, Vol. II. containing his Epistles and the Dunciad. *ib.* 1735.

FOLIO.

591 Bodin, ses six Livres de la Republique. Paris, 1579.
594 Davila's History of the Civil Wars of France. Lond. 1647.
599 Thuani Historia sui Temporis, cum continuatione. Aurel. 1626, 4 vol.
606 Baronii Annales Ecclesiastici. Antwerp, 1629, 12 vol.
627 Baconi, Fran. Opera omnia. Lond. 1630.
628 Stobæi Sententiæ. Gr. Lat. studio Gesneri. Basil, 1549.
632 Morery's Historical, Geographical, and Poetical Dictionary improved. London, 1694, 8vo.
634 Letters of Sir William Temple while he was ambassador abroad, from 1665 to 1671 inclusive, MS.

OCTAVO.

543 Ludlow's Memoirs, Vol. III. Switzerland, 1699.

Digitized by Google

Gulliver's travels was drawn during this period. There are many circumstances which favour this opinion. The germ of this celebrated work is to be found in the travels of Martinus Scriblerus, which was sketched probably before danger and proscription had dispersed the literary club. The exasperated spirit with which the Dean viewed public affairs in Great Britain after the death of Queen Anne, coincides with many of the satirical touches of the Travels. Besides, a letter from Vanessa contains an allusion to the adventure of Gulliver with the Ape in Brobdignag, and from the same correspondence we learn, that Swift was, in 1722, engaged with the perusal of voyages and travels, studies congenial to the composition of the Travels. He told Mrs. Whiteway, what he afterwards in substance told the world in person of the captain, that he had borrowed the sea terms in Gulliver from the old voyages, which he had fully perused. All which circumstances favour the opinion, that the Voyages of Gulliver were sketched during the period of which we treat, though, in the state in which they were published, they bear reference to politics of a later date.

Swift's lighter literary amusements were such as arose from his habits of society. These habits appear to have been very regular. He boarded himself for the sake of economy with Mr. Worrall, whose wife preserved that neatness and good order which was particularly agreeable to him. But he kept two public days at the Deanery weekly. We can see, that, according to the manner of the times, and the practice of his predecessor, Dean Sterne, Swift's entertainments were accounted rather economical, although his guests, so far as conviviality was consistent with decorum, were welcomed with excellent wine. Swift, who used to declare he was never intoxicated in his life, had nevertheless lived intimately with those at whose tables wine was liberally consumed, and he was not himself averse to the moderate use of it.* In some respects, however, his mode

* Dr. King says Swift drank about a pint (English measure) of claret after dinner, which the Doctor, himself very abstemious, considered as too much.

Digitized by Google

of life ill-suited the poorer clergy, who expected more frequent hospitality at the Deanery, and their disappointment exposed Swift to some obloquy. His best defence is, that he received his preferment on such terms as involved him considerably in debt, and that his parsimony never interfered with the calls of justice, or of benevolence. During all his life, there was a struggle between the rigour of his habitual economy, and his sense of justice, which led sometimes to instances of very ridiculous accuracy, in adjusting his conduct, so as to compound matters between them. The story of his giving Pope and Gay, after a narrow calculation of what a supper would have cost him, half-a-crown a-piece for the expense which they had spared him in coming after they had supped, is an excellent example.* Delany informs us, in like manner, that when Lady Eustace, or other women of rank, dined at the Deanery, Swift allowed them a shilling a-head to provide their own enter-

* The anecdote is given by Spence, in the words of Pope. "Doctor Swift has an odd, blunt way, that is mistaken by strangers for ill nature—'Tis so odd that there is no describing it but by facts. I'll tell you one that first comes into my head. One evening Gay and I went to see him: you know how intimately we were all acquainted. On our coming in, 'Heyday, gentlemen, (says the Doctor), what's the meaning of this visit! How came you to leave all the great lords that you are so fond of, to come hither to see a poor Dean?'—'Because we would rather see you than any of them.'—'Ay, any one that did not know so well as I do, might believe you. But since you are come, I must get some supper for you, I suppose.'—'No, Doctor, we have supped already.'—'Supped already, that's impossible! why, it is not eight o'clock yet.—That's very strange! but if you have not supped, I must have got something for you.—Let me see, what should I have had? a couple of lobsters; ay, that would have done very well; two shillings—tarts a shilling: but you will drink a glass of wine with me, though you supped so much before your usual time only to spare my pocket.'—'No, we had rather talk with you than drink with you.'—'But if you had supped with me, as in all reason you ought to have done, you must then have drank with me.—A bottle of wine, two shillings,—two and two is four, and one is five; just two and sixpence a-piece. There, Pope, there's half-a-crown for you, and there's another for you, sir; for I won't save any thing by you, I am determined.'—This was all said and done with his usual seriousness on such occasions; and, in spite of every thing we could say to the contrary, he actually obliged us to take the money."

Digitized by Google

tainment, and used to struggle hard that only sixpence should be allowed for the brat, as he called Miss Eustace, afterwards Mrs. Tickell. And when he dined with his poorer friends, he insisted upon paying his club as at a tavern, or house of public entertainment.* The social party who assembled round him at the Deanery, were naturally led to exert themselves for his amusement, and the verses of Sheridan, Delany, and other literary friends, provoked his own replies, and lightened his more severe studies. In this contest of ingenuity, Sheridan seems to have been both witty himself, and the cause of wit in others. His simplicity and characteristic absence of mind were tempered with so much humour and readiness of repartee, that his company was invaluable to the Dean, and their friendship was never interrupted until the increasing irascibility and violence of Swift overcame the patience, and offended the honest pride of his respectful friend. Delany was a character of a different description. He had risen from a low origin by the distinction due to his learning and genius. But prouder, more cautious, or more interested than Sheridan, he kept aloof from that horseplay of raillery which passed between the latter and the Dean, and which unavoidably lowers, in a certain degree, the man whose good humour is contented to submit to it. He made court to the Dean by verses less humorous, but more elegant than those of Sheridan, and he also had his answer in the style which he used. The distinction which the Dean made between them is obvious, from his exhorting Delany to impress on Sheridan the sense of propriety and self-respect in which he thought him deficient. Yet, though the guarded caution of Delany commanded more respect, the honest and precipitate good humour of Sheridan deserved better of Dean

* There is a most excellent letter, (now published for the first time in the edition of Swift's Works to which these Memoirs are prefixed, Vol. XVIII. p. 252.) in which the Dean introduces himself in the third person, as a stranger, to the hospitality of the Rev. Mr. Blachford, and settles with great minuteness the allowance with which he proposes to compensate the expense of his reception.

Digitized by Google

Swift, than that the former should have been exalted over him for an example. The high opinion expressed of Delany in the piece to which we refer,* was afterwards in some respects qualified, as may be seen in the next section. Stella was active too in this poetical strife. It has been doubted whether she actually finished the verses to which her name is prefixed; but if she really wrote the last verse in the epitaph on Demar the usurer, she wrote by far the best lines in the poem.

Gaulstown House, the seat of Lord Chief Baron Rochfort, where Swift sometimes resided for months at a time, gave variety to these exercitations. The Chief Baron, it would seem, was not very friendly to the existing government, so that epilogues, songs, and other vehicles of political satire, abounded at his mansion. Besides these, Swift indulged himself in an humorous poetical record of the occupations of the family and visitors, which gross and stupid malice afterwards construed into a lampoon. The author's vindication we reserve till we find him charged with a similar offence. But Dean Percival, whom he had rallied severely in the poem, was so much affected as to attempt a poetical reply, which, besides being very scarce, contains such a curious account of Swift's house-keeping and hospitality, though obviously viewed with a malignant eye, that it deserves being preserved in a note.†

* Verses to Mr. Delany, Swift's Works, Vol. XIV. p. 122.

† The following lampoon is mentioned by Swift in a letter to Mr. Cope, 9th October 1722. The provocation given to Dean Percival was a reflection upon his pedantry and his wife's housewifery. Swift says, "Dean Percival has answered the other Dean's Journal in Grub-street, justly taxing him for avarice and want of hospitality. Madam Percival absolutely denies all the facts; insists that she never made candles of dripping; that Charley never had the chincough, &c." See his Works, Vol. XVI. p. 392. The first part of Percival's verses allude to the house-keeping at the Deanery, while Sterne held that preferment.—

A DESCRIPTION,

IN ANSWER TO THE JOURNAL. DUBLIN, 1722.

NEAR St. Sepulchre's stands a building
Which, as report goes, ne'er had child in:

Digitized by Google

The Dean's correspondence also occupied a good part of his leisure. It was chiefly confined to Tony

The house is large, and to adorn her,
From garret down to chimney corner,
The upper chambers were well lined
With antique books and books new coin'd;
Which plainly show'd its founder's head
With learning of all sorts supplied.
The house on every part was stored
To entertain the greatest lord;
Nor did the poorest meet disdain,
But fill'd his belly with his brain.
The kitchen grate, like Vesta's altar,
Had fire in't whene'er you call'd, sir.
There were appointed vestal dames
To stir up the devouring flames.
On these were laid fat pigs and geese,
All beasts and fowls for sacrifice.
The sea itself could not escape,
For fish of all sorts here would gape,
And bleed, soals, salmons, lobsters, cods,
To gratify the hungry gods;
And, to drive off the mind's dejection,
Wit flew about, but no reflection;
To keep the spirits in vibration,
Wine join'd with wit for the libation.
The Dean was small, his soul was large;
He knew his duty to discharge;
He loved his chapter, treated all
His dignitaries, vicars choral,
From Tallboy down to little Worrall.
In short, he lived, and that's what few can,
Justly report of Swift our new Dean.
He sometimes to a chapter goes
With saucy strut and turn'd-up nose,
Leans on his cushion, then he'll bid ye,
Hearken to what all know already.
Perhaps he'll sneer or break a jest,
But de'il a bit to break your fast.
Go when you please, let the clock strike
What hour it will, 'tis all alike.
Some country Preb. comes just at one
In hopes to dine, and so begone.
The Dean appears:—"I'm glad to see you,
Pray tell what service I can do you.
Be quick, for I am going out."
The hungry Levite's vex'd no doubt,
To be thus baulk'd; tucks up his gown,
Makes a low scrape, and so to town:
Is welcome there, so makes a shift
To drink a glass and rail at Swift.

Digitized by Google

friends, as his acquaintance was dropped by those of differing sentiments in party matters. With such con-

But of this farce you'll know the reason,
You shall, I'm sure it can't be treason.
He dines abroad you think—mistaken,
He dines at home on sprouts and bacon:
Besides, his two chief slaves are missing,
To boil his drink and broil his grisking,
Pert Jack and Robin, I mean Grattan,
As suppliant slaves as e'er had hat on;
Such slaves as these you know delights him,
Who're sure to trudge when he invites 'em;
And that's as often as in his kitchen
A fire is made to broil a pigeon.
The seventeenth of March each year,
The chapter meets to make good cheer.
The Dean's allowed five pounds or more,
To entertain about half a score.
You're sure to meet a handsome dish,
Of salmon, or some other fish;
A dish of soup, a leg of mutton,
By servants are the table put on;
A plate with puddings then next comes,
One plain, one almond, t'other plumbs:
The second course adorns the table,
With loin of beef most formidable;
A sallad, with a dish of fowl,
Of this huge treat makes up the whole.
Now if some critic should accost him,
And ask how much this dinner cost him,
He could not say that he had lost
Any great matter by the roast;
The treat, just as the Dean bespoke it,
Put two pound ten into his pocket,
Besides, the fragments of the feast
Will feed his house a week at least.
As for himself, with draggled gown,
Poor-curate-like, he'll trudge the town,
To eat a meal with punster base,
Or buffoon call him, if you please.
Sometimes to Gallstown he will go,
To spend a month or two, or so,
Admires the baron, George and's spouse,
Lives well, and then lampoons the house.
Thus far our bard in doggerel rhyme,
In the Dean's kitchen, spent his time;
He's dull, because there is no fire,
Or wine, his rustic muse t'inspire.
But let's proceed from these poor tricks
Of th' kitchen to his politics.

Digitized by Google

duct, it is pleasing to contrast the generosity of Addison, who took this period of adversity to renew that intimacy which had been broken off, while the Tories were triumphant. He intimated to Swift, through the Bishop of Derry, that it was his generous intention and earnest wish, that party should give way to friendship; and the Dean's answer to this overture, now first made public, was at the same time an elegant congratulation upon Addison's being made Secretary of State. "Three or four more such choices," he said, "would gain more hearts in three weeks, than the harsher measures of government in as many years."* But the death of Addison broke off their renewed correspondence, after some kind letters had been exchanged. Swift found a valuable successor in Tickell the poet, surviving friend and literary executor of Addison. He was secretary to the Lords Justices of Ireland, an office of high trust, and he often employed the interest which it gave him in compliance with Swift's recommendations. The Dean does not seem to have approved or shared the resentment of his friend Pope against Mr. Tickell, but

They stare, and think he knows as well
All depths of state as Machiavel.
It must be so, since from him flows,
Whate'er the Earl of Oxford knows.
He swears the project of the peace
Was laid by him in Anna's days.
The South Sea ne'er could have miscarried
As he contrived, but others marr'd it:
Thus he goes on two hours and more,
And tells the same thing o'er and o'er.
The darkest plots he can unravel,
And split them ope from the head to th' navel,
What dire effects o'er bandbox hover'd,
Venice preserved, the plot's discover'd.
Venice here stands for's great Mæcenas,
The Earl of Oxford, not Æneas.
And yet when all is done and said,
A Tale of a Tub fills up his head.
Thus having given a description,
Of this great wit and politician,
I now surrender my commission.

* Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 274.

Digitized by Google

maintained an intimate and friendly intercourse with him till his death.*

From these studies and amusements the Dean was roused in the year 1720, and again appeared on the stage as a political writer, no longer, indeed, the advocate and apologist of a ministry, but the undaunted and energetic defender of the rights of an oppressed people. No nation ever needed more a patriotic defender than Ireland at this period. The portion of prosperity which she had enjoyed under the princes of the House of Stuart, had been interrupted by a civil war, the issue of which sent the flower of her native gentry, as well as her best and bravest soldiers, into foreign exile. The Catholic part of the community laboured under disqualifications of various kinds, and, above all, under a suspicion of disaffection, the most insurmountable incapacity of all. They sought their safety in remaining quiescent, well aware that every complaint originating with them would be construed into the murmurs of rebellion. The Irish Protestants, or, as Swift himself loves to term them, the English settled in Ireland,† were divided among themselves into Whigs and Tories, Churchmen and Dissenters, and an hundred lesser factions, fomented by petty political leaders, who found their interest in dissensions, which raised them into notice and consequence. England, whose councils have been sometimes too easily swayed by a narrow-souled, and short-sighted mercantile interest, availed herself of the unhappy state of the sister kingdom, to degrade her into a subdued province, in-

* By the obliging communication of Major Tickell, the descendant and representative of the poet, the edition to which these Memoirs are prefixed is enlarged by several letters which passed between Swift and his ancestor.

† Nothing is more remarkable in all Swift's writings than his anxiety to draw a line between the native Irish, and the English settled in Ireland. See the Drapier's Letters, Swift's Works, Vol. VI. p. 453, also Vol. XIX. p. 97, and other passages of his works. Swift, patriot as he was, was prejudiced on this subject by birth, and by his situation as a dignitary of the Protestant church. But it was also prudent to make such a distinction, to avoid the clamour against Papists and Jacobites.

Digitized by Google

stead of strengthening the empire by elevating her into an integral part. The power of legislating for Ireland was assumed by the English Parliament, though contrary to principle and precedent; and it was so exercised, as to fetter, as far as possible, the commerce of the kingdom, and render it subordinate to, and dependent upon that of England. The statutes of 10th and 11th William III. prohibited the exportation of all Irish woollen goods, excepting into England and Wales, and thus, at once, ruined the woollen manufactories of Ireland, worth upwards of an annual million, and drove the staplers into a smuggling trade with France, by which the Irish wool was exported to that country, to the great benefit of the manufactures recently established in Picardy. Ireland did not want patriots to state these grievances. Molyneux, the friend of Locke, and of liberty, published, in 1698, "The Case of Ireland's being bound by Acts of Parliament in England, stated;" in which he showed, with great force, that the right of legislation, of which England made so oppressive an use, was neither justified by the plea of conquest, purchase, or precedent, and was only submitted to from incapacity of effectual resistance. The temper of the English House of Commons did not brook this remonstrance. It was unanimously voted that these bold and pernicious assertions were calculated to shake the subordination and dependence of Ireland; as united and annexed for ever to the crown of England; and the vote of the House was followed by an address to the queen, complaining that, although the woollen trade was the staple manufacture of England, over which her legislature was accustomed to watch with the utmost care, yet Ireland, which was dependent upon, and protected by England, not contented with the linen manufacture, the liberty whereof was indulged to her, presumed also to apply her credit and capital to the weaving of her own wool into woollen cloths, to the great detriment of England, &c. &c. &c. Not a voice was raised in the British House of Commons, to contradict maxims equally impolitic and tyrannical, and which were much more worthy of the monopolizing

Digitized by Google

corporation of some peddling borough, than of the enlightened senate of a free people. In acting upon these commercial restrictions, wrong was heaped upon wrong, and insult was added to injury, with this advantage on the side of the aggressors, that they could intimidate the injured people of Ireland into silence, by raising, to drown every complaint, the cry of rebel and of Jacobite.

These evils Swift beheld with all the natural ardour of a disposition which rose in opposition to tyranny. "Do not," said he to Delany, "the corruptions and villainies of men eat your flesh and exhaust your spirits ?"* The fire, in the words of the inspired writer, burned within him, and in 1720, he gave vent to his indignation in the short treatise, entitled, "A Proposal for the universal Use of Irish Manufactures, &c. utterly rejecting and renouncing every thing wearable that comes from England."† In appreciating the courage of Swift in recommending a measure so obnoxious to the principles upon which Ireland had hitherto been governed, we must remember he was himself a marked and even a proscribed man, intimately connected with the measures of that minister, whose period of power was now usually termed *the worst of times.* The system of non-importation, which he recommends as a just retort upon the engrossing spirit of English commerce, was likely to excite hatred and alarm among the powerful bodies, who, from self-interest or prepossession, took an interest in the monopoly; and there were unfortunately both judges and courts of justice with whom that alarm would have fearful influence. And all these risks Swift was contented to incur, for the sake of a country to which he came as to a land of banishment; which had received him with public expressions of insult and contumely; and to which, on every occasion, he expressed a rooted aversion. He incurred them also without the possibility of any other reward than

* Delany having replied in the negative, "Why," answered the Dean in a fury, "how can you help it?" "Because I am commanded to the contrary," rejoined his friend,—"fret not thyself because of the ungodly."

† Swift's Works, Vol. VII. p. 270.

Digitized by Google

attends the conscience of a patriot who has discharged his duty.

The storm which he had dared, was not long of bursting. It was intimated to Lord Chief-Justice Whitshed by "a person in great office," that Swift's pamphlet was written for the purpose of setting the two kingdoms at variance, and it was recommended that the printer should be prosecuted with the uttermost rigour. Whitshed was not a person to neglect such a hint; and the arguments of government were so successful, that the grand juries of the county and city presented the Dean's tract as a seditious, factious, and virulent libel. Waters, the printer, was seized, and forced to give great bail. But upon his trial, the jury, though some pains had been bestowed in selecting them, brought him in not guilty; and it was not until they were worn out by the threats of the lord chief-justice, who detained them eleven hours, and sent them out nine times to reconsider their verdict, that they at length, reluctantly, left the matter in his hands, by a special verdict. But the measures of Whitshed were too violent to be of real service to the government. Men's minds revolted against his iniquitous conduct, and the trial of the verdict was deferred from term to term, until the arrival of the Duke of Grafton, the lord-lieutenant. A *noli prosequi* was then granted, which left the advantage, if not the honour of victory, with Swift and the patriots of Ireland. He failed not to improve it; for, as a victorious general sends off his light troops in pursuit of a routed enemy, he persecuted Lord Chief-Justice Whitshed, and Godfrey Boate, a judge of the King's Bench, who had also distinguished himself in the trial of the printer, by such an unrelenting train of lampoons and epigrams, as at once made his satirical powers dreaded, and excited, against the offenders and their memory, the odium which their conduct had deservedly excited.

The proposal of a National Bank next alarmed the vigilance of the Dean. This scheme, however useful when the principles of commercial credit are established and understood, was made at a time when chimerical schemes of every possible kind were circulated in such

Digitized by Google

abundance, as if it had been the intention of the projectors to gage the utmost extent of human credulity. Not only were public trading companies proposed for the most ridiculous and extravagant purposes, as introducing the breed of asses, (which seems to have been unnecessary at that period,) sweeping the streets, maintaining bastard children, &c., but one ingenious projector actually obtained subscriptions to a large extent, and some advance in ready money upon each, for a project, the object of which he declined to explain further, than by promising a return to the adventurers of cent. per cent. At such a crisis, and when the petition to Parliament for a bank was but supported by a few obscure stock-jobbers, Swift saw it could only produce national disappointment and distress, and wrote three or four satirical essays, burlesquing the proposal itself, and ridiculing those who had subscribed to it. The Irish parliament being of the Dean's opinion, the project was rejected in the ensuing session.*

The execution of one Elliston, a noted street-robber, gave Swift an opportunity of exercising that remarkable versatility of composition, by which he could assume any character which he chose to personate. The effect of this piece was to put an end, for many years, to the practice of street-robbery; for, being received as genuine by the companions of the sufferer, they really believed, as there asserted, that he had left a list of their names to be proceeded against, if they did not relinquish their evil courses.† Some other trifles were published by the Dean about this time, and in general the eyes of the people of Ireland began to be turned towards him, as one who was not likely to be silent in asserting her rights. But his opposition to Wood's project raised him at once to the summit of popularity, and forms one of the most remarkable points in his history.

There being a deficiency of copper coinage in Ireland, the king, in 1723, granted to William Wood, upon certain conditions, the patent right of coining halfpence and farthings to the extent of L.108,000, to be current in

* Swift's Works, Vol. VI. p. 300. † Ibid. p. 314.

Digitized by Google

that kingdom. Abstractedly, there could be no objection to this mode of supplying the want of copper, providing the coinage was of proper weight and quality. But the patent had been obtained in what may be termed a surreptitious manner, through the influence of the Dutchess of Kendal, the mistress of George I., to whom Wood had promised a share of the profits. It was passed without consulting either the lord-lieutenant or privy-council of Ireland; and, in devolving upon an obscure individual the right of exercising one of the highest privileges of the crown, the dignity of the kingdom was disgracefully compromised. The Irish parliament felt the insult, and caught the alarm; and the family of Broderick, then almost the chief of the Whig interest, from conviction, or from dislike to the lord-lieutenant, or from a mixture of these motives, threw their weight into the scale of opposition, and, by their countenance, secured those who made it from the charge of disaffection. While the struggle was impending, the voice of Swift was heard in the celebrated Drapier's Letters,—strong in argument, and brilliant in humour, but unequalled in the address with which those arguments are selected, and that humour applied. It cannot be supposed that he really considered Wood's project, simply and abstractedly, as of a ruinous, or even dangerous tendency. There was, doubtless, a risk of abuse; but, setting that apart, the supply of copper money which it provided was advantageous, and even necessary to Ireland. Nor was the hazard of Wood's misusing the patent so great, but what might easily be guarded against. The halfpence of William Wood were remarkably handsome, and well executed, as appears from the engraving prefixed to the Drapier's letters,* the gift of the learned Dr. Hill of Dublin to the editor: and they were proved by the experiments at the Mint, under the direction of Sir Isaac Newton, to equal, or exceed, in weight, purity, and value, coins of the same denomination in England. That the coinage was exposed to be counterfeited, is an evil incidental to current money of every description; but

* Swift's Works, Vol. VI.

Digitized by Google

precautions were taken that the patentee himself should not lower its value, by the nomination of a comptroller on the part of the crown, to inspect and assay from time to time the copper, whether coined or uncoined. It may be doubtful whether, in the abstract, a more economical and unexceptionable mode of supplying the acknowledged want of copper money in Ireland, could have been devised by government.

But, as already hinted, the danger and dishonour of the measure lay in its application to Ireland in its existing state. Within the last thirty years, repeated and oppressive steps had been taken to reduce this ancient kingdom, though still retaining the outward insignia of national legislation and sovereignty, into the condition of a conquered province, bound by the acts of the British Parliament, where she had neither friend, patron, nor representative.* The aphorism that Ireland was, and ought to be, dependent on Britain in this servile sense, had not only been loudly pronounced, with a denunciation of vengeance against those who should dare to deny it, but it had been already acted upon. Ireland was subjected to a commercial slavery, which left neither her credit, her commodities, nor her havens, at her own disposal; and how long the civil and domestic freedom of her people might be spared, was a question which seemed to depend on the moderation of those who usurped the right of being her legislators. Such was the condition of the kingdom when Wood's scheme was brought forward; a measure, therefore, of far less importance in its real merit, than as it necessarily involved the grand question of the servitude or independence of Ireland. That the king should, without the consent either of the Irish parliament or privy-council, delegate a branch of his prerogative to a private projector, give, as it were in farm, to an ordinary contractor or mechanic, the exercise of a privilege, which has, in every country, been deemed a peculiar

* And all this in despite not only of national law and reason, but of the express maxim adopted so early as the reign of Richard III. *Hibernia habet parliamentum et faciunt leges: et nostra statuta non ligant eos quia non mittunt milites ad parliamentum.*

Digitized by Google

and unalienable attribute of regal power, indicated such a contempt for the very form of independence, that, where decency was so little consulted, the patriots of Ireland were justified in apprehending consequences still more fatal, and more arbitrary. The language of Wood himself, who imprudently boasted of his favour with Walpole, and threatened that his coin should be imposed upon the Irish by force, if rejected upon fair terms, was at once irritating and alarming. The formality of a vice-regal court, the supposed representative of majesty, and depositary of the executive power in Ireland, would only in future be necessary to hold levees, and give birth-day balls, while the essential exercise of the royal prerogative might be exercised in England, or leased out by wholesale to adventurers and projectors, with power to them, like the farmers-general of France, to call in military assistance where opposition required it. Thus, deprived alike of the power of making and of executing her own laws, the kingdom must have remained mocked with the semblance of a court, a parliament, and a free government; forms serving only to irritate the people with the recollection of the rights which were no longer protected or enforced. Such was the state of Ireland; and the inference which might fairly be drawn from the disrespectful and unceremonious manner in which the sovereign's right of coinage was exercised in the case of William Wood. But to have proclaimed this truth, would have been construed into a misdemeanour, little short of high treason; and Swift had in recollection the example of Molyneux, as well as his own narrow escape on the publication of his Proposal for encouraging Irish manufactures. He took his ground, therefore, with infinite address and caution, and confined himself, in opening the controversy, to the objections which applied to Wood's project in detail, cautiously veiling the grand question of national right, which was necessarily involved in the discussion.

The first three letters of M. B., Drapier in Dublin, dwell, therefore, upon arguments against Wood's halfpence, derived from their alleged inferiority in weight

Digitized by Google

and value, and the indifferent or suspicious character of the projector himself. These arguments, also, had the advantage of being directly applicable to the grosser apprehensions of the "tradesmen, shopkeepers, farmers, and country people," to whom they are professedly addressed. Such persons, though incapable of understanding, or being moved by the discussion of a theoretical national right, could well comprehend, that the pouring into Ireland a quantity of copper coinage, alleged to be so base in denomination, that twelve pence were not intrinsically worth more than a penny, must necessarily drain the country of gold and silver, and occasion great individual loss, as well as national distress. The bitter and satirical passages against Wood himself were also well adapted to the taste of the vulgar, whose callous palate is peculiarly excited by the pungency of personal satire. Whether Swift himself believed the exaggerated reports which his tracts circulated concerning the baseness of the coin, and the villainy of the projector, we have no means of discovering. Once satisfied of the general justice of his cause, he may have deemed himself at liberty to plead it by such arguments as were most likely to afford it support, without rigid examination of their individual validity, or, (which is most likely,) like most warm disputants, he may himself have received, with eager faith, averments so necessary to the success of his plan. But it is certain, that, in these first three letters, the king, the minister, the mistress, and the British privy-council, are not mentioned, or treated with studied respect; while the whole guilt and evil of the scheme are imputed to the knavery of William Wood, who, from an obscure ironmonger, had become an avaricious and unprincipled projector, ready and eager to ruin the whole kingdom of Ireland, in order to secure an exorbitant profit to himself.

The ferment produced by a statement so open to the comprehension, and so irritating to the feelings, of the nation at large, became unspeakably formidable. Both the Irish Houses of Parliament joined in addressing the Crown against Wood's scheme. Parties of all denomi-

Digitized by Google

nations, whether religious or political, for once united in expressing their abhorrence of the detested halfpence. The tradesmen to whom the coin was consigned, refused to receive them, and endeavoured, by public advertisement, to remove the scandal of being concerned in the accursed traffic. Even Wood's near relatives were compelled to avert public indignation, by disavowing all concern with his contract.* Associations were formed for refusing their currency; and these extended from the wealthy corporation of Dublin down to the hawkers and errand-boys, who announced to their employers, that they would not receive, nor offer in change, Wood's drossy halfpence, since they could "neither get news, ale, tobacco, nor brandy, for such cursed stuff." The matter being thus adopted by the mob, they proceeded according to their usual custom; made riotous processions, and burned the unfortunate projector in effigy. In short, such was the state

* See the advertisement of John and Daniel Molyneux, ironmongers, (Swift's Works, Vol. VI. p. 427;) one of whom I take to have been Wood's brother-in-law. Ibid. Vol. VII. p. 83. The following is a similar disclamation now before me:

"ADVERTISEMENT.

"Whereas I, Thomas Handy, of Meath Street, Dublin, did receive by the last packet, from a person in London, to whom I am an entire stranger, bills of lading for eleven casks of Wood's halfpence, shipped at Bristol, and consigned to me by the said person on his own proper account, of which I had not the least notice until I received the said bills of lading.

"Now I, the said Thomas Handy, being highly sensible of the duty and regard which every honest man owes to his country and to his fellow-subjects, do hereby declare, that I will not be concerned, directly or indirectly, in entering, landing, importing, receiving, or uttering any of the said Wood's halfpence, for that I am fully convinced, as well from the addresses of both houses of Parliament, as otherwise, that the importing and uttering the said halfpence will be destructive to this nation, and prejudical to his Majesty's revenue.

"And of this my resolution I gave notice by letter to the person who sent me the bills of lading, the very day I received them, and have sent back the said bills to him.

"THO. HANDY.

"Dublin, 29th August 1724."

Digitized by Google

of the public mind, that it was unsafe for any one to be supposed favourable to Wood's project.

Swift, finding the people in a disposition so favourable for the maintaining their rights, did not suffer their zeal to cool for lack of fuel. Not satisfied with writing, he preached against Wood's halfpence. One of his sermons is preserved, and bears the title "On doing good." It verifies his own account, that he preached not sermons, but political pamphlets. At his instigation, also, the grand-jury, and principal inhabitants of the liberty of St. Patrick's, joined in an association for refusing this odious coin.* Besides the celebrated Drapier's Letters, he supplied the hawkers with a variety of ballads and prose satires, seasoned with all the bitterness and pungency of his wit, directing the popular indignation against the contractor, without sparing some very intelligible innuendoes against his patrons and abettors in England.† By such means the timid were

* "Dublin, August 20, 1724.

"This day, the grand-jury, and the rest of the inhabitants of the liberty of the Dean and Chapter of St. Patrick's, Dublin, attended the Dean of St. Patrick's, with the following declaration, which they read to him, and desired that he would give orders to have it published.

"The Declaration of the Grand-Jury, and the rest of the inhabitants of the Liberty of The Dean and Chapter of St. Patrick's, Dublin.

"We, the grand-jury, and other inhabitants of the liberty of the Dean and Chapter of St. Patrick's, Dublin, whose names are underwritten, do unanimously declare and determine, that we never will receive or pay any of the halfpence or farthings already coined, or that shall hereafter be coined, by one William Wood, being not obliged by law to receive the same; because we are thoroughly convinced by the addresses of both Houses of Parliament, as well as by that of his Majesty's most honourable privy-council, and by the universal opinion of the whole kingdom, that the currency of the said halfpence and farthings would soon deprive us of all our gold and silver, and therefore be of the most destructive consequence to the trade and welfare of the nation."

† The edition to which these Memoirs are prefixed, contains several of these pieces, not before published, particularly

Tom Punsibi's (i. e. Sheridan's) Dream, Vol. VI. p. 455.

Wood's Confession to the Mob. Vol. VII. p. 90.

A first and second Letter from a Friend to the Right Honourable ——— ———, (Lord Chief-Justice Whitshed.) Vol. VI. p. 467.

Digitized by Google

encouraged, the doubtful confirmed, the audacious inflamed, and the attention of the public so riveted to the

A Letter to William Wood, Esq. from his only Friend in Ireland. Vol. VII. p. 73.

A Letter to William Wood from a Member of that Society of Men in derision, called Quakers. Ibid. p. 78.

Woods revived; or a short Defence of his proceedings in London, Bristol, &c., in reference to the kingdom of Ireland. 1725. Ibid. p. 59.

The true State of the case between the kingdom of Ireland of the one part, and Mr. William Wood of the other part. By a Protestant of Ireland. Ibid. p. 64.

Of the poetical pieces in this controversy, the following, believed to be from Swift's pen, are, for the first time, reprinted, from hawkers' copies, or broadsides, as they are called.

Epigram, in answer to the Dean's Verses on his own Deafness. Vol. XII. p. 391.

Verses addressed to the Citizens, and signed M. B. Ibid. p. 489.

An excellent Song upon the Grand-Jury. Ibid. p. 491.

Upwards of fifty excellent Verses in addition to the "Serious Poem upon William Wood." Ibid. p. 386.—They seem to have been omitted in the Dean's works on account of their reflecting on the Dutchess of Kendal, and were retrieved from the original broadside.

Besides the tracts in prose, and satires in verse, which the Dean poured out in such profusion, the following, and probably many other pieces, appeared, by different hands.

PROSE.

Considerations on the Attempts made to pass Wood's Coin.

Reasons, showing the Necessity the People of Ireland are under to refuse Wood's Coinage.

Both reprinted in the first collected edition of the Drapier's Letters.

Some Considerations on the Attempts made to pass Mr. Wood's Brass Money in Ireland. By a Lover of his Country. 1724.—Four pages folio.

A creed for an Irish Commoner.—A broadside.

A Letter from the Right Honourable ——, to the Reverend N. N.—Noticed in a subsequent note. Broadside.

Seasonable advice to M. B. Drapier, occasioned by his Letter to the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Molesworth.—Also hereafter mentioned. Broadside.

VERSE.

A true Character of the Wooden Monster, Arch-enemy to Ireland, By no Friend to William Wood.

To draw a tinker, esquire, and an ape,
With lively strokes, deformity, and shape, &c.

Digitized by Google

discussion, that it was no longer shocked at the discussion of the more delicate questions which it involved; and the viceroy and his advisers complained, that any proposition, however libellous and treasonable, was now published without hesitation, and perused without horror, providing that Wood and his halfpence could be introduced into the tract. The Duke of Grafton (then lord-lieutenant) found himself unable to stem the popular torrent; and it became evident, that the scheme, if enforced, would occasion a civil war.

In this emergency Walpole was not wanting to himself. His first object was, if possible, to appease the general ferment, by such a composition as to the extent of the proposed issue of coin, as would leave unquestioned the assumed right to utter it. He therefore endeavoured to let the scheme drop gradually, by a proclamation which limited the issue of half-pence to £40,000 instead of £108,000. And when this failed, he contrived, by a bold turn of political intrigue, to impose the task of enforcing Wood's project, and subduing the discontent of the Irish, upon a rival statesman, who was supposed to have had no small share in obstructing the one, and fomenting the other. This was the celebrated Lord Carteret, then secretary of state, learned, accomplished, eloquent, ambitious, and a personal favourite of his sovereign. He had maintained a war of intrigue in the interior of the cabinet, against Walpole, and his brother-in-law, Townsend; and by caballing with the Brodericks, and furnishing, it was said, the private history of the mode in which Wood's

Remarks upon the Report of the Committee of the Lords of his Majesty's Most Honourable Privy-Council, in relation to Mr. Wood's Halfpence. By Samuel Owens, Locksmith.—Broadside.

Vulcan, my Muse, to me describe
Hibernia's case, without a bribe, &c.

A New Poem, *ascribed* to the Honourable the Gentlemen of the late Grand Jury.—Broadside,

As shipwreck'd passengers, when got to shore,
One time rejoice, &c.

Digitized by Google

patent was obtained, he had greatly encouraged the discontents of Ireland, trusting that all the odium would be imputed to Walpole. But his interest in the cabinet gradually sunk before that of his rival, who, unable, perhaps, to remove Carteret entirely from office, enjoyed the refined revenge of sending him to Ireland as lord-lieutenant, in the room of the Duke of Grafton, with the injunction of carrying on Wood's project if it were possible; but otherwise with permission to drop it, by the suspension or surrender of the patent. But ere Carteret arrived on the scene, to extinguish the fire which he himself had fanned, the discussion had begun to assume its real character.

It was now obvious, from the temper of Ireland, that the true point of difference between the countries might safely be brought before the public. In the Drapier's fourth letter, accordingly, Swift boldly treats of the royal prerogative, of the almost exclusive employment of natives of England in places of trust and emolument in Ireland; of the dependency of that kingdom upon England, and the power assumed, contrary to truth, reason, and justice, of binding her by the laws of a Parliament in which she had no representation. It is boldly affirmed, (though in terms the most guarded,) that the revolutions of England no further affected Ireland, than as they were consonant to freedom and liberty; and that, should an insurrection fix a new prince on the throne of the sister kingdom, the Irish might still lawfully resist his possessing himself of theirs. The threats of the English ministers to enforce the currency of Wood's half-pence by violent measures, are next alluded to; and the Drapier concludes this part of his reasoning in the following very marked passage: "The remedy is wholly in your own hands, and, therefore, I have digressed a little, in order to refresh and continue that spirit so seasonably raised among you, and to let you see, that, by the laws of GOD, of NATURE, of NATIONS, and of your COUNTRY, you ARE, and OUGHT to be, as FREE a people as your brethren in England."

This tract pressed at once upon the real merits of the question at issue, and the alarm was instantly taken

Digitized by Google

by the English government. The necessity of supporting their domination devolved upon Carteret, who was just landed; and, accordingly, a proclamation was issued, offering £300 reward for the discovery of the author of the Drapier's fourth letter, described as a wicked and malicious pamphlet, containing several seditious and scandalous passages, highly reflecting upon his majesty and his ministers, and tending to alienate the affections of his good subjects in England and Ireland from each other. Harding, the printer of the Drapier's Letters, was thrown into prison, and a prosecution directed against him, at the instance of the Crown. Swift, bold in the merit of his cause, and in the support of the people, was not to be appalled by this menacing procedure: He went to the levee of the lord-lieutenant, burst through the circle with which he was surrounded, and, in a firm and stern voice, demanded of Lord Carteret the meaning of these severities against a poor industrious tradesman, who had published two or three papers, designed for the good of his country. Carteret, to whom Swift was personally well known, and who could have no doubt of his being the author of the Drapier's Letters, evaded the expostulation, by an apt and elegant quotation from Virgil:

> Res dura, et regni novitas, me talia cogunt
> Moliri.———

The courtly circle, astounded at the daring conduct of Swift, were delighted and reassured by the lord-lieutenant's presence of mind and urbanity.

Two other anecdotes occurred, which served to show the bold, stern, and uncompromising temper of the Dean. The first is well known: A servant, named Robert Blakely, whom he intrusted to copy out, and convey to the press the Drapier's Letters, chanced one evening to absent himself without leave. His master charged him with treachery, and, upon his exculpation, insisted that at least he neglected his duties as a servant, because he conceived his master was in his power. "Strip your livery," he commanded, "begone from the Deanery instantly, and do the worst to revenge

Digitized by Google

yourself that you dare do." The man retired, more grieved that his master doubted his fidelity, than moved by this harsh treatment. He was replaced at the intercession of Stella; and Swift afterwards rewarded his fidelity, by the office of verger in the cathedral of St. Patrick's. The other anecdote bears, that while Harding was in jail, Swift actually visited him in the disguise of an Irish country clown, or *spalpeen*. Some of the printer's family or friends, who chanced to visit him at the same time, were urging him to earn his own release by informing against the author of the Drapier's Letters. Harding replied steadily, that he would rather perish in jail before he would be guilty of such treachery and baseness. All this passed in Swift's presence, who sat beside them in silence, and heard, with apparent indifference, a discussion which might be said to involve his ruin. He came and departed without being known to any one but Harding.

When the bill against the printer of the Drapier's Letters was about to be presented to the grand jury, Swift addressed to that body a paper, entitled "Seasonable Advice," exhorting them to remember the story of the league made by the wolves with the sheep, on condition of their parting with their shepherds and mastiffs, after which they ravaged the flock at pleasure. A few spirited verses addressed to the citizens at large, and enforcing similar topics, are subscribed by the Drapier's initials, and are doubtless Swift's own composition. Alluding to the charge that he had gone too far in leaving the discussion of Wood's project to treat of the alleged dependence of Ireland, he concludes in these lines :—

> If, then, oppression has not quite subdued,
> At once, your prudence and your gratitude;
> If you yourselves conspire not your undoing,
> And don't deserve, and won't draw down your ruin;
> If yet to virtue you have some pretence;
> If yet you are not lost to common sense,
> Assist your patriot in your own defence.
> That stupid cant, He went too far, despise,
> And know, that to be brave, is to be wise:

Digitized by Google

Think how he struggled for your liberty,
And give him freedom, whilst yourselves are free.*

At the same time was circulated the memorable and apt quotation from scripture, by a Quaker:—"And the people said unto Saul, shall JONATHAN die, who has wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan that he died not."† Thus admonished by verse, law, and scripture, the grand-jury assembled. It was in vain that the same Lord Chief-Justice Whitshed, who had caused the Dean's former tract to be denounced as seditious, and procured a verdict against the printer, exerted himself strenuously upon this similar occasion. The hour of intimidation was past, and the grand-jury conscious of what the country expected from them, brought in a verdict of *ignoramus* upon the bill. Whitshed, after demanding, unconstitutionally, and with idecorous violence, the reasons of their verdict, could only gratify his impotent resentment, like his prototype Scroggs, on a similar occasion, by dissolving the grand-jury. They returned into the mass of general society, honoured and thanked for the part which they had acted, and the chief-justice, on the contrary, was execrated for his arbitrary conduct.‡ Such means would injure a good cause, and, unless supported by tyrannical force, can never prop a bad one. The next grand-jury of the

* See the whole address, Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 489.

† I. Samuel, chap. xiv. 54th verse.

‡ See two spirited letters addressed to him, probably by the Dean's friend and legal adviser, Robert Lindsay, whose counsel he had used during the whole controversy.—Swift's Works, Vol. VI. p. 467. And he received another broad hint of his unconstitutional proceeding, by publication of the Resolutions of the House of Commons in 1680, declaring the discharging of a grand-jury before the end of the term, or assizes, arbitrary, illegal, and destructive to public justice. Ibid. p. 466. There is room to believe, that his death, which speedily followed, was hastened by the various affronts which were heaped upon him. See Boulter's Letters. But Swift was determined to gibbet his very memory, and vindicates himself for doing so. Vol. VII. p. 178.

Digitized by Google

county and city of Dublin presented Wood's scheme as a fraud and imposition on the public, and omitted not to express their gratitude to those patriots by whom it had been exposed. Three other Drapier's letters were published by Swift, not only in order to follow up his victory, but for explaining more decidedly the cause in which it had been won. The fifth letter is addressed to Lord Molesworth, and has for its principal object a justification of the former letters, and a charge of oppression and illegality, founded upon the proceedings against the author and printer. The sixth letter is addressed to Lord Chancellor Middleton, who strenuously opposed Wood's project, and resigned his office in consequence of the displeasure of the court being expressed on account of such resistance. It is written in the Dean's person, who pleads the cause of the Drapier, and, from several passages, does not appear anxious to conceal this identity. This also relates chiefly to the conduct of Whitshed, and the merits of the prosecution against Harding. The seventh letter, though last published, appears to have been composed shortly after the fourth. It enters widely into the national complaints of Ireland, and illustrates what has been already mentioned, that the project of Wood was only chosen as an ostensible and favourable point on which to make a stand against principles of aggression, which involved many questions of much more vital importance. This letter was not published until the Drapier's papers were collected into a volume. Meantime Carteret yielded to the storm,—Wood's patent was surrendered,—and the patentee indemnified by a grant of £3000 yearly, for twelve years. Thus victoriously terminated the first grand struggle for the independence of Ireland.

The eyes of the kingdom were now turned with one consent on the man, by whose unbending fortitude and pre-eminent talents this triumph was accomplished. The Drapier's head became a sign, his portrait was engraved, woven upon handkerchiefs, struck upon medals, and displayed in every possible manner, as the liberator of Ireland. A club was formed in honour of the

Digitized by Google

patriot, who held regular meetings to commemorate his excellencies, study his doctrines, and carouse to his health.* In all this, Swift's popularity did not probably exceed that of other patriots, who, at some decisive and critical period, have had the fortune to render a striking service to their country. Nor is it singular that the Dean's memory should, after death, be honourably and tenderly cherished by the nation which he did so much to rescue from subjection. But the period between the deeds on which a patriot rests his fame, and the time when they are recorded on his tomb-stone, is but rarely distinguished by the unclouded and steady glow of uniform popularity. History affords, in all countries, too many instances of the mutability of public favour, and exhibits a long list of those benefactors of nations who have heard the songs composed in their praise turned into libellous parodies, and the acclamations of their countrymen exchanged for as loud and general shouts of reprobation or derision. To the honour of the warm-hearted and generous people for whom he exposed his safety, the sun of Swift's popularity shone unclouded even after he was incapable of

* To the Drapier's Club we owe the first collection of the Drapier's letters, published by Faulkner at their desire, under the following title :—"Fraud Detected ; or, the Hibernian Patriot, containing all the Drapier's letters to the people of Ireland on Wood's coinage, &c. interspersed with the following particulars, viz.—1. The addresses of the Lords and Commons of Ireland against Wood's coin.—2. His Majesty's answer to the said addresses.—3. The report of his Majesty's most honourable Privy-Council.—4. Seasonable advice to the Grand-Jury.—5. Extract of the votes of the House of Commons of England, upon breaking a grand-jury.—6. Considerations on the attempts made to pass Wood's coin.—7. Reasons showing the necessity the people of Ireland are under, to refuse Wood's coinage. To which are added, Prometheus, a poem. Also, a new poem to the Drapier ; and the songs sung at the Drapier's Club in Truck-street, Dublin, never before printed. With a preface explaining the usefulness of the whole."—Dublin : Reprinted and sold by George Faulkner, in Pembroke Court, Castle-Street, 1725, 12mo.

This publication contains five songs to the honour of the Drapier, to which some others might be added from the broadsides before the Editor. But they would only show the zeal and attachment of the worthy members of the Drapier's Club at Taplin's, Truck-Street, without doing any credit to their literary talents.

Digitized by Google

distinguishing its radiance. While he was able to go abroad, a thousand popular benedictions attended his steps, and if he visited a town where he was not usually resident, his reception resembled that of a sovereign prince. The slightest idea of personal danger to THE DEAN, for by that title he was generally distinguished, aroused a whole district in his defence; and when, on one occasion, Walpole meditated his arrest, his proposal was checked by a prudent friend, who enquired if he could spare ten thousand soldiers to guard the messenger who should execute so perilous a commission. His foibles, though of a kind which seem peculiarly obnoxious to the observation and censure of the vulgar, were overlooked with the pious respect paid by filial affection to the imperfections of a parent. The governors of Ireland, from the courtly Carteret to the haughty Dorset, even while disliking his politics, if not his person, saw themselves under the necessity of respecting his influence, and temporizing with his zeal. And as he was mourned in his last stage of imbecility, and followed to the grave by the lamentations of his people, so there have been few Irish authors who have not since that period paid to the memory of Swift that tribute of gratitude, which is so peculiarly his due. One of the latest, as well as the most eloquent panegyrics which have decorated his monument, occurs in "A Sketch of the State of Ireland, past and present," published in 1810. With the just and concise character of the Dean of St. Patrick's, viewed as an Irish patriot, we close the present section.

"On this gloom one luminary rose, and Ireland worshipped it with Persian idolatry; her true patriot—her first, almost her last. Sagacious and intrepid—he saw, he dared; above suspicion, he was trusted; above envy, he was beloved; above rivalry, he was obeyed. His wisdom was practical and prophetic—remedial for the present, warning for the future; he first taught Ireland that she might cease to be a despot. But he was a churchman. His gown impeded his course, and entangled his efforts,—guiding a senate, or heading an army, he had been more than Cromwell, and Ireland

Digitized by Google

not less than England. As it was, he saved her by his courage—improved her by his authority—adorned her by his talents—and exalted her by his fame. His mission was but of ten years; and for ten years only did his personal power mitigate the government; but though no longer feared by the great, he was not forgotten by the wise; his influence, like his writings, has survived a century; and the foundations of whatever prosperity we have since erected, are laid in the disinterested and magnanimous patriotism of Swift.

SECTION VI.

Swift retires to Quilca—His friendship for Sheridan—He visits England—Has an audience of Walpole—Becomes known at the Prince of Wales's Court—Returns to Ireland and publishes Gulliver's Travels—He revisits England—And is recalled by Stella's indisposition—Her death—Swift breaks with the Court and Minister—His writings on Irish affairs—He quarrels with Lord Allen—Is intimate with Carteret—A Letter is forged in his name to the Queen—His Miscellaneous Prose Writings about this period—His Poems—His residence at Gossford with Sir Arthur Acheson, and the Verses which were written there.

When Wood's project appeared to be on the verge of being abandoned, Swift, as if desirous of escaping from the popular applause which hailed him from every quarter, retreated with Mrs. Dingley and Mrs. Johnson to Quilca, a small country-house belonging to his intimate friend Dr. Sheridan, in a wild and sequestered situation, about seven miles from the town of Kells. In this retirement, where the want of accommodation became the subject of one or two of those pieces of

Digitized by Google

humour, which he has called *family trifles*, he remained for several months. He seems to have meditated a final blow at Wood and his half-pence; but hearing the patent was resigned, he stopped the publication of the intended treatise. This was probably the seventh letter, which did not appear until the Dean's works were collected, in 1735. Meanwhile, the inadvertence of his friend Sheridan engaged him in a very troublesome affair, in which Swift laboured hard to protect and assist him.

Dr. Sheridan, highly respectable for wit, learning, and an uncommon talent for the education of youth, and no less distinguished by his habits of abstraction and absence, and by a simplicity of character which ill suited with his wordly interest, had been Swift's friend of every mood and of all hours, since the Dean's final retirement into Ireland. A happy art of meeting and answering the raillery of his friend, and of writing with facility verses upon domestic jests or occasional incidents, amused Swift's lighter moments, while Sheridan's sound and extensive erudition enlightened those which were more serious. It was in his society that Swift renewed his acquaintance with classical learning, and perused the works which amused his retirement. In the invitations sent to the Dean, Sheridan was always included; nor was Swift to be seen in perfect good humour, unless when he made part of the company. Indeed, Sheridan understood the Dean's temper so well, and knew so happily how to arrest, by some sudden stroke of humour, those fits of violent irritability to which Swift's mind was liable, as his outward frame was to those of vertigo, that he was termed, among their common friends, the David who alone could play the evil spirit out of Saul. Swift was not insensible of the value of such a friend, nor unwilling to repay his services by every means in his power. His high rank and character enabled him to promote the flourishing state of Sheridan's school, which was then the first in the kingdom. But the improvidence of the generous but imprudent teacher, frustrated the kind intentions of his patron; for with a wife and increasing family, his ex-

Digitized by Google

penses kept pace with his income; and Swift saw with regret that nothing but a removal from the capital would prevent his being ultimately in distressed circumstances. With this friendly purpose, the Dean obtained from the Lord-Primate Lindsay, an offer of the richly endowed school of Armagh for Sheridan. But the specious arguments of some persons who pretended to be the well-wishers of this unsuspicious and single-hearted character, prevailed upon him to decline this offer. He had leisure to reflect upon his folly, when, some years afterwards, the same individuals countenanced another school in opposition to his, and at length compelled him to abandon Dublin.* But before this event took place, Swift had availed himself of another opportunity to serve him.

Lord Carteret, notwithstanding the prosecution of Harding, and the proclamation offering a reward for the discovery of the Drapier, was a friend of Swift, and so far coincided in his political opinions, as to be a secret enemy of Walpole. Thus it was twice Swift's singular fortune to have proclamations sent forth against him, under the authority of ministers, who were not only his personal friends, but who approved in secret of the very treatises against which their public manifestoes were fulminated. Besides, Carteret felt that he had been sent to Ireland only to exercise a nominal vice-sovereignty, while the real power was lodged with the primate Boulter, and he was not averse to form a sort of independent party to balance, in some degree, those violent ministerialists by whom he was watched and surrounded. Accordingly, Swift had afterwards occasion, in one of his most happy ironical compositions, to

* In answer to a letter (Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 446.) in which Sheridan complains of his insidious friends, who lulled him asleep until they stole his school into the hands of a blockhead, Swift says, "I own you have too much reason to complain of some friends, who, next to yourself, have done you most hurt; whom I still esteem and frequent, although I confess I cannot heartily forgive. Yet certainly the case was not merely personal malice to you (although it had the same effects) but a kind of I know not what job, which one of them has heartily repented." I suspect Delany to be the person here indicated. He had no good-will to Sheridan.

Digitized by Google

vindicate the lord-lieutenant from the charge of conferring favours and preferments upon persons disaffected to the king's government.

Through the recommendation of Swift, and from Carteret's own disposition to encourage learning, of which he was a perfect judge, Dr. Sheridan was named one of the lord-lieutenant's chaplains, and presented with a small living near Cork. But, alas! while thus mounted on the first round of the ladder of preferment, he had the inadvertence to kick it from beneath him. When he went to Cork to be inducted in his living, Sheridan undertook to preach for Archdeacon Russel of that city, and, without considering that it was the anniversary of the accession of the House of Hanover, he selected a sermon, which had for the text, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." It proved, at least, an evil day for Sheridan, who, as Swift expressed it, shot his fortune dead by chance-medley with this single text. Richard Tighe, a man, according to the Dean, of no great dimensions, either of body or mind, but mighty in zeal for the House of Hanover and Protestant succession, carried the report full speed to the Castle of Dublin, exaggerating the offence, by alluding to Sheridan's suspected disaffection. Swift, on the other hand, exerted every effort to save his friend from the too probable consequences of this inadvertence. He applied to the lord-lieutenant himself, and to Mr. Tickell, distinguished by his poems, whose friendship was a legacy from Addison to Swift, and who was now secretary to the lords-justices.* But Carteret durst not adventure to give such scandal to the ruling party, as the overlooking this important misdemeanour might have implied. Sheridan was therefore disgraced at the viceregal court, and struck from the list of chaplains. He was in part consoled by the generosity of Archdeacon Russel, who, considering himself as having given occasion to his misfortune, had the munificence to present him with the manor of Drumlane, worth one hundred and fifty pounds yearly. But the demerits of the in-

* See Swift's Works, Vol. XVI. p. 488. Vol. XIX. p. 284.

Digitized by Google

former were never pardoned or forgotten by Swift, who made a vow, and kept it well, to persecute Tighe with satire, and never to quit him living or dead.*

This misfortune of Sheridan embittered the Dean's residence at Quilca, which was otherwise agreeable. His time was chiefly spent in acting as Sheridan's bailiff, overseeing his labourers, and executing plans of improvement for the pleasure of surprising him when vacation permitted him to visit the country.† His literary

* Ibid. Vol. VII. p. 289, and the various satires against Tighe, entitled Mad Mullinix and Timothy, Tim and the Fables, Tom and Dick, Dick a Maggot, Clad all in Brown, Dick's Variety, Vol. XII. p. 402. *et sequen.*; besides repeated mention of him under the title of Dick Fitz-Baker and Pistorides, epithets bestowed on Tighe because he was descended from a contractor who supplied Oliver Cromwell's army with bread.

† Of this the younger Sheridan has recorded a whimsical instance. The Dean had a mind to surprise the Doctor, on his next visit, with some improvements made at his own expense. Accordingly he had a canal cut of some extent, and at the end of it, by transplanting some young trees, formed an arbour, which he called *Stella's bower*, and surrounded some acres of land about it with a dry-stone wall, (for the country afforded no lime,) the materials of which were taken from the ground, which was very stony. The Dean had given strict charge to all about him to keep this secret, in order to surprise the Doctor on his arrival; but he had in the meantime received intelligence of all that was going forward. On his coming to Quilca, the Dean took an early opportunity of walking with him carelessly toward this new scene. The Doctor seemed not to take the least notice of any alteration, and, with a most inflexible countenance, continued to talk of indifferent matters. "Confound your stupidity," said Swift in a rage, "why, you blockhead, don't you see the great improvements I have been making here?"—"Improvements! Mr. Dean; why, I see a long bog-hole out of which I suppose you have cut the turf; you have removed some of the young trees, I think, to a worse situation; as to taking the stones from the surface of the ground, I allow that is a useful work, as the grass will grow the better for it; and placing them about the field in that form, will make it more easy to carry them off."—"Plague on your Irish taste," says Swift; "this is just what I ought to have expected from you; but neither you nor your forefathers ever made such an improvement; nor will you be able, while you live, to do any thing like it."

The Doctor was resolved to retaliate on the Dean the first opportunity. It happened when he was down there in one of his vacations, that the Dean was absent for a few days on a visit elsewhere. He took this opportunity of employing a great number of hands to make an island in the middle of the lake, where the water was twenty feet deep; an arduous work in appearance, but not hard to be executed

Digitized by Google

employment was the finishing, correcting, amending, and transcribing Gulliver's Travels, to be published, he intimates, so soon as he could find a printer courageous enough to venture his ears.* He admitted Sheridan to this secret labour;† but when Tickell expressed curiosity to see the treatise on which he was at work, he frankly informed him, that it totally disagreed with his notions of persons and things, and, as if conscious of writing to a Secretary of State, he adds, it would be impossible for Mr. Tickell to find his treasury of waste papers without searching nine houses, and then sending to him for the key.‡ Having completed this celebrated work, the Dean resolved, for the first time since the death of Queen Anne, to revisit England, a purpose which he accomplished in spring, 1726.

Bolingbroke now returned from his exile, Pope, Ar-

in a place abounding with large stones upon the surface of the ground, and where long heath grew every where in great plenty; for by placing quantities of those stones in large bundles of heath, the space was soon filled up, and a large island formed. To cover this, a sufficient quantity of earth and green sods were brought, and several well-grown osiers, and other aquatics, were removed to it. The Doctor's secret was better kept than Swift's; who, on his return, walked toward the lake, and, seeing the new island, cried out in astonishment, "Heigh! how the water of the lake is sunk in this short time to discover that island of which there was no trace before!"—"Greatly sunk, indeed," observed the Doctor with a sneer, "if it covered the tops of those osiers." Swift then saw he had been fairly taken in, and acknowledged the Doctor had got the better of him, both in his stratagem, and the beauty of his improvement.

* Letter to Pope, 29th September 1725, Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. p. 3.

† He tells him in a letter, 11th September 1725, "You will every day find my description of Yahoos more resembling." Ibid. Vol. XVI. p. 484.

‡ Letter to Mr. Tickell, 7th July 1726, Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 290. He appears to have been anxious to enforce this article upon Mr. Tickell; for he writes to Sheridan, 8th July 1726, "Our friend at the Castle wrote to me about two months ago, to have a sight of these papers, &c. of which I brought away a copy. I have answered him, that whatever papers I have, are conveyed from one place to another, through nine or ten hands, and that I have the key. If he should mention anything of papers in general, either to you or the ladies, and that you can bring it in, I would have you and them confirm the same story, and laugh at my humour in it," &c. Ibid. Vol. XVII. p. 40.

Digitized by Google

buthnot, Gay, Bathurst, and other old friends, received him with open arms, and with the melancholy pleasure of sailors who meet after a shipwreck, from which they have escaped by different means.

Amongst these friends, Pope, although not by any means the earliest, appears gradually to have become the most intimate. The Dean resided chiefly in his house at Twickenham, and an acquaintance which had begun in Queen Anne's reign, between the protected poet and the patron, gradually ripened into intimate and equal friendship. Their characters were in some respects opposite, but these very points of opposition were such as removed the possibility of rivalry.

Pope's character and habits were exclusively literary, with all the hopes, fears, and failings, which are attached to that feverish occupation,—a restless pursuit of poetical fame. Without domestic society, or near relations; separated by weak health and personal disadvantages from the gay; by fineness of mind and lettered indolence, from the busy part of mankind, surrounded only by a few friends, who valued these gifts in which he excelled, Pope's whole hopes, wishes, and fears, were centred in his literary reputation. To extend his fame, he laboured indirectly, as well as directly; and to defend it from the slightest attack, was his daily and nightly anxiety. Hence the restless impatience which that distinguished author displayed under the libels of dunces, whom he ought to have despised, and hence too the venomed severity with which he retorted their puny attacks. Swift also was irritable and satirical, but from different causes. He never assumed, and probably disdained the character of a mere man of letters, whose sufferings or enjoyments depended upon the public reception of his works. His writings he only valued in so far as they accomplished the purpose for which they were written, and was so far from seeking the reputation which they might have attracted to the author, that he almost in every instance sent them into the world without his name. Hence he felt no jealousy of contemporary authors, and was indifferent to the criticism with which his treatises were assailed, unless in so far as it affected the

Digitized by Google

argument which they were designed to support. Bred under Temple, the favourite of Oxford, and now the patriotic champion of Ireland, his hopes and fears were for the political interests which he espoused; his love was for party-friends, and his hatred and vengeance for political opponents. His feelings were those of a statesman, not of an author, and had been exalted from the cause of a party, to be fixed upon the liberties of a nation. The pecuniary emoluments of literature Swift seems never to have coveted, and therefore readily abandoned to Pope the care of selecting and arranging their fugitive pieces into three volumes of Miscellanies, as well as the profit which might arise from the publication. He himself was engaged in matters of more momentous importance.

We have observed, that Walpole, now the omnipotent prime-minister, had violently assaulted Swift in the House of Commons, during the ministry of Oxford. Of this the Dean retained no vindictive recollection; for, during the whole controversy about Wood's project, he treated the character of Walpole with considerable respect: and now, upon arriving in London, after having dined with Sir Robert, upon invitation, he obtained an interview with him upon business, for the purpose of representing to him the distressed state of Ireland. The interview was granted through the mediation of the celebrated Earl of Peterborow, and took place on 27th April 1726. The Dean stated at length the grievances of Ireland, being all that could contribute to render a nation poor and despicable: the nation being controlled by laws, to which her legislature did not consent; their manufactures interdicted, to favour those of England; their trade cramped and ruined by prohibitions; the natives studiously excluded from all places of honour, trust, or profit; while the conduct of those to whom the government was delegated, lay under no other check than might arise from her own sense of justice. But Walpole was prepossessed against any statement of the affairs of Ireland that might come from Swift. Ere the Dean had left that kingdom, the primate Boulter, to whom Walpole chiefly confided the efficient power in Irish affairs,

Digitized by Google

had written to the English minister in the following terms: "The general report is, that Dean Swift designs for England in a little time; and we do not question his endeavours to misrepresent his Majesty's friends here, wherever he finds an opportunity: but he is so well known, as well as the disturbances he has been the fomenter of in this kingdom, that we are under no fear of his being able to disserve any of his Majesty's faithful servants, by anything that is known to come from him: but we could wish some eye were had to what he shall be attempting on your side of the water."* Thus prepossessed against all that might come from the author of the Drapier's Letters, Walpole turned a deaf ear to the grievances of Ireland; and complaining that the king derived little revenue from that kingdom, proceeded to enlarge upon the opinions which he had adopted from its governors, in a manner which Swift deemed inconsistent with the notions of liberty, which Britons have ever considered as the inheritance of a human creature. The minister and patriot parted on terms of mutual civility, but without having made the least impression upon each other's opinions. Swift, on the following morning, wrote the substance of their conference in a letter to Lord Peterborow, requesting his lordship to put it into the hands of Sir Robert Walpole. It need scarce be remarked, that the most brazen effrontery would not have ventured in such a letter, to be so communicated, to conceal or misrepresent what had passed between them; and that the account so given, and never contradicted, must contain the genuine record of this remarkable conversation.

An unworthy use was made of this interview, and of Swift's having accepted the previous invitation of Walpole; as if he had meant to barter his principles, and offer the minister the support of his pen, on condition of his being preferred in England. This charge requires a short investigation; for it was countenanced, to a certain extent, by Walpole, and zealously promul-

* See Boulter's Letters, Vol. I. p. 62. Swift detested Boulter, and Ambrose Phillips, his secretary.

Digitized by Google

gated by his partizans. Had such an offer been made, it must have been worse than folly in Walpole to refuse the assistance of Swift, while he was expending very large sums to reward the political treatises of Arnal and Henley; so that, considering the well-known sagacity of the minister, as well as his unscrupulous mode of charming opposition to silence, by the ready mode of corrupt influence, we may conclude, that the offer not being accepted proves that it never was made. It is certain, indeed, that Swift would willingly have received from Walpole an opportunity of exchanging, and even at considerable disadvantage, his Irish deanery for some English living, which might have provided for his usual expenditure, and placed him for life in England. But this was uniformly opposed by the prime-minister, not because he disdained to purchase the support of Swift's pen, but because he had little hopes of laying him under such a weight of obligation, as might have prevented the risk of its being employed to his prejudice. Swift had declared, he was neither offered, nor would have received preferment, excepting on such conditions as would never be given to him. This is perfectly consistent with his desire to exchange the Deanery of St. Patrick's for an English living; a transaction which might have been arranged on terms of such advantage to his successor as should lay Swift under no obligation, and leave his political conduct free and unfettered. If he would not accept of a bishopric but on his own terms, he could be hardly disposed to barter his independence, merely to be translated to a worse living in England, than he already possessed in the sister country. And admitting that Walpole retained no memory of former quarrels, he may have believed it by no means his interest to bring Swift to England, unless upon such terms as would have made him entirely his own. Bolingbroke and Pulteney gave him enough of disturbance, without their forces being augmented by the keenest satirical writer of the age, whose friendships and principles were likely to engage him against the ministers of George I. Walpole, however, might have acted more wisely, by at once, and generously, doing what must have gratified Swift, and trusting to his sense of justice

Digitized by Google

and honour. It is certain, that Pulteney's civilities had as yet failed to engage the Dean in the politics of England; and in Swift's reply to the advice which Pope delicately insinuates, deprecating his involving himself in party disputes, and exhorting him to write only for truth, honour, and posterity, he seems to acquiesce in its propriety.* But ancient friendship for Bolingbroke, and new causes of resentment against Walpole, combined to effect a change of his resolution.

Notwithstanding the coldness of the premier, Swift might hope to accomplish the desired change of residence by means of patronage more illustrious, though, in reality, less efficient than that of Walpole. The Prince of Wales, afterwards George II. and his consort, the princess, now kept a sort of court at Leicester House, and were endeavouring to form an interest separate from that of the king and his minister. For this purpose they courted such Whigs as were discontented with the court, and bestowed countenance, and indulgence even, upon the dejected Tories. The princess had also a taste for literature, which she indulged by summoning around her men of genius and learning, whose society the prince endured at least, though he was far from enjoying it. Pope, Gay, and Arbuthnot, were frequent and assiduous attendants on this little court. Their immediate protectress, however, was not the princess, but rather the celebrated Mrs. Howard; who filled the twofold situation of confidante of Caroline and mistress to the prince. It would seem, that, possessed of this double claim to favour, her interest could only be limited by the power of her friend and of her lover. But this was far from being the case. The princess, indulgent to her husband's gallantries, was jealous, to a great degree, of any one possessing political influence over him; and managed to retain her power so absolutely, that all who attempted to attain preferment through the favour of Mrs. Howard were certain to be thwarted in their hopes. Pope's religion was a bar to his forming any hopes by attendance on the prince's court; nor

* Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. p. 79, 92.

Digitized by Google

does Arbuthnot appear to have had any views of preferment. But both were anxious to promote the interest of Gay; and unfortunately, instead of trusting to the influence of the princess, who had expressed her resolution to patronize him, they took the contraband course, by applying all their court and flattery to Mrs. Howard. At this juncture, Dean Swift arrived in England; and as the princess was easily rendered curious to see so remarkable a person, she laid her commands upon him to attend her, which were nine times repeated before he complied with them. When presented to her, he said, (in allusion to the savage lately caught in Hanover,) "he understood her royal highness loved oddities; and that, having lately seen a wild boy from Germany, she was now desirous to see a wild dean from Ireland." The freedom of the address was well received; and the Dean was honoured with so much of the princess's notice, as might well have authorized more ambitious prospects, upon the prince's succession to the crown, than Swift ever appears to have entertained. His visits at Leicester House were regular, and always well received. His residence with Pope, at Twickenham, was also favourable to his paying his court when the princess resided at Richmond Hill, in the vicinity. The rest of his time was given to Lord Bolingbroke, at Dawley; a circumstance which, of itself, must have excited in Walpole dislike and suspicion.

Swift's visit to England was shortened, in the month of July 1726, by the accounts of Mrs. Johnson's rapid decline. His letters on this melancholy subject, are a true picture of an agonized heart. Yet even the approaching calamity did not prevent his clinging to his peculiar system; and, in a letter to Dr. Stopford, he labours to impress on his correspondent, that the agony which he felt at parting with Stella, was that of friendship, not of love. He mentions her, as "*one* of the *two* oldest and dearest friends" he had in the world, and only distinguishes her from her gossipping and common-place companion Mrs. Dingley, as "the younger of two." And concludes by conjuring Stopford to believe "that violent friendship is much more lasting,

Digitized by Google

and as engaging as violent love." His letter to Sheridan contains more deep and unrestrained expressions of anguish: "The account you give me is nothing but what I have for some time expected with the utmost agonies.—I look upon this to be the greatest event that can ever happen to me; but all my preparations will not suffice to make me bear it like a philosopher, nor altogether like a Christian. Judge in what a temper of mind I write this. The very time I am writing, I conclude the fairest soul in the world hath left its body. I have been long weary of the world, and shall, for my small remainder of days, be weary of life, having for ever lost that conversation which could only make it tolerable."* He betrays the utmost horror at the idea of being in Ireland, when this beloved friend should breathe her last, and conscious, perhaps, of the incipient disorder of his mind, conjures his correspondents to apprize him of the state of her malady, did it seem to infer immediate danger of dissolution, that he might be saved the risk of such a trial.

On his arrival in Ireland, Swift was received with all the honours which the Drapier had earned for the Dean. Bells were rung, bonfires kindled, and a body of the most respectable citizens escorted their patriot in a sort of triumphal procession from the shore to the Deanery. But he was yet more gratified by finding that Mrs. Johnson was in part recovered, to ease at least, and immediate safety, though not to health or strength. The blow he so much dreaded was suspended, though not averted.

The celebrated Travels of Gulliver were now given to the world, but under the mystery which almost always shadowed Swift's publications. Swift left England in the month of August, and about the same time Motte the bookseller received the manuscript, dropped, he said, at his house in the dark, from a hackney coach.† It appeared in the November following, with

* Letter to Sheridan, 27th July 1726. Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. p. 49.

† Charles Ford, formerly employed in the negotiation with Bar-

Digitized by Google

several retrenchments and alterations, owing to the timidity of the printer, of which Swift complains heavily in his correspondence, and which he endeavours to correct by the letter from Gulliver to his cousin Sympson, prefixed to the subsequent editions. But the public discovered no tameness in this extraordinary satirical romance, which produced a universal sensation, being read from the highest to the lowest, and from the cabinet-council to the nursery. The world was frantic to discover the author, and even his friends, Pope, Gay, Arbuthnot, and others, wrote to Swift as if they were in doubt on the subject. But though they make use of expressions so strong, as to deceive some of his biographers into an opinion, that they were really in the uncertainty which they express, there is yet no doubt that all his literary brotherhood were more or less acquainted with the work before it was published.* Their reserve was either affected to humour Swift's wish of remaining concealed, or, perhaps, in case of the work giving offence, to avoid furnishing the evidence against the author, which might have arisen from an intercepted letter.

ber, about the "Free Thoughts," p. 138, rendered this second piece of secret service to the Dean.

* Swift, so early as 29th September 1725, mentions to Pope, his being employed in correcting and arranging for publication his Travels, in four parts. Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. p. 3. Arbuthnot mentions it in his letter of 17th October. (Ibidem, p. 12.) It is scarce possible that the scheme, thus announced, should not have been canvassed, and the manuscript revised, during the fraternal meetings at Twickenham and Dawley. In evidence that it was so, we find Lord Bolingbroke on 23d July, three months before the Travels appeared, addressing Swift, Pope, and Gay, as the three *Yahoos* of Twickenham, a jest which could not have been used by his lordship, and would have been unintelligible to two of the triumvirate he addressed, if Gulliver's Travels had not been known to them all. Besides, Arbuthnot, immediately on the publication, writes to Swift as the author. "I will make over all my profits to you for the property of Gulliver's Travels, which I believe will have as great a run as John Bunyan." (Ibidem, p. 74.) Pope alludes to it as what Swift called his "cousin's wonderful book," (Gulliver's Travels, it will be remembered, were sent forth by his cousin Sympson,) and mentions, though in guarded terms, his having gone to London, expressly to see how the work was received. (Ibid. p. 78.)

Digitized by Google

We have endeavoured elsewhere to make marks on those celebrated Travels.* Perhaps ever exhibited such general attractions to all classes. It offered personal and political satire to the readers in high life, low and coarse incident to the vulgar, marvels to the romantic, wit to the young and lively, lessons of morality and policy to the grave, and maxims of deep and bitter misanthrophy to neglected age, and disappointed ambition. The plan of the satire varies in the different parts. The Voyage to Lilliput refers chiefly to the court and politics of England, and Sir Robert Walpole is plainly intimated under the character of the Premier Flimnap,† which he afterwards probably remembered to the prejudice of the Dean's view of leaving Ireland. The factions of High-Heels and Low-Heels express the factions of Tories and Whigs, the Small-Endians and Big-Endians the religious divisions of Papist and Protestant; and when the heir-apparent was described as wearing one heel high and one low, the Prince of Wales, who at that time divided his favour between the two leading political parties of England, laughed very heartily at the comparison. Blefescu is France, and the ingratitude of the Lilliputian court, which forces Gulliver to take shelter there, rather than have his eyes put out, is an indirect reproach upon that of England, and a vindication of the

* In the remarks prefixed to them in Vol. XI. of Swift's Works.

† The Lilliputian treasurer's fall from the tight rope, which was broken by one of the king's cushions, seems to intimate Walpole's resignation in 1717, when he was supposed to be saved from utter disgrace, by the interest of the Dutchess of Kendal. The ridicule thrown upon the orders of knighthood by the Lilliputian nobles leaping over a stick, for the decorations of the blue, red, and green threads, is principally aimed at Walpole, who, to enlarge this class of honours and rewards, revived the order of the Bath, as a preliminary step to that of the Garter. Upon that occasion, the Dean wrote some lines, now published for the first time, which conclude with the very idea more fully brought out in the travels to Lilliput;

> And he who'll leap over a stick for the king,
> Is qualified best for a dog in a string.

See the verses, Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 396.

Digitized by Google

flight of Ormond and Bolingbroke to Paris.* Many other allusions may be traced by those well acquainted with the secret history of the reign of George I. The scandal which Gulliver gave to the empress, by his mode of extinguishing the flames in the royal palace, seems to intimate the author's own disgrace with Queen Anne, founded upon the indecorum of the Tale of a Tub, which was remembered against him as a crime, while the service which it had rendered the cause of the high church was forgotten.† It must also be remarked, that the original institutions of the empire of Lilliput are highly commended, as also their system of public education, while it is intimated, that all the corruptions of the court had been introduced during the three last reigns. This was Swift's opinion concerning the English constitution.

In the Voyage to Brobdignag the satire is of a more general character; nor is it easy to trace any particular reference to the political events or statesmen of the period. It merely exhibits human actions and sentiments as they might appear in the apprehension of beings of immense strength, and, at the same time, of a cold, reflecting, and philosophical character. The monarch of these sons of Anak is designed to embody Swift's ideas of a patriot king, indifferent to what was curious, and cold to what was beautiful, feeling only interest in that which was connected with general utility and the public weal. To such a prince, the intrigues, scandals, and stratagems, of an European court, are represented as equally odious in their origin, and contemptible in their progress. A very happy effect was also produced by turning the telescope, and painting Gulliver, who had formerly been a giant among the Lilliputians, as a pigmy amidst this tremendous race. The same ideas are often to be traced, but, as they are reversed in the part which is performed by the narrator, they are rather illustrated than repeated. Some

* In corroboration, it may be observed, that Gulliver's crime, as well as that imputed to Bolingbroke, was having made a peace, when it was possible entirely to have crushed a vanquished enemy.

† Page 59.

Digitized by Google

passages of the court of Brobdignag were supposed to be intended as an affront upon the maids of honour,* for whom, Delany informs us, that Swift had very little respect.†

The Voyage to Laputa was disliked by Arbuthnot, who was a man of science, and probably considered it as a ridicule upon the Royal Society; nor can it be denied, that there are some allusions to the most respectable philosophers of the period. An occasional shaft is even said to have been levelled at Sir Isaac Newton. The ardent patriot had not forgot the philosopher's opinion in favour of Wood's halfpence. Under the parable of the tailor, who computed Gulliver's altitude by a quadrant, and took his measure by a mathematical diagram, yet brought him his clothes very ill made and out of shape, by the mistake of a figure in the calculation, Swift is supposed to have alluded to an error of Sir Isaac's printer, who, by carelessly adding a cipher to the astronomer's computation of the distance between the sun and the earth, had increased it to an incalculable amount. Newton published, in the Amsterdam Gazette, a correction of this typographical error, but the circumstance did not escape the malicious acumen of the Dean of St. Patrick's. It was also believed by the Dean's friends, that the office of flapper was suggested by the habitual absence of mind of the great philosopher. The Dean told Mr. D. Swift, that Sir Isaac was the worst companion in the world, and that, if you asked him a question, "he would revolve it in a circle in his brain, round, and round, and round, (here Swift described a circle on his own forehead,) before he could produce an answer."‡

* Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. p. 94.

† "I well remember his making strange reports of the phraseologies of persons about the court, and particularly the maids of honour, at the time of that visit" [to England.]—Delany's Remarks, p. 75. The letters of the beautiful and lively Miss Bellenden, lately published in the "Suffolk Papers," certainly vindicate the Dean's censure.

‡ The Dean used also to tell of Sir Isaac, that his servant having called him one day to dinner, and returning, after waiting some time, to call him a second time, found him mounted on a ladder placed against the shelves of his library, a book in his left hand, and

Digitized by Google

But, although Swift may have treated with irreverence the first philosopher of the age, and although it must be owned that he evinces, in many parts of his writings, an undue disrespect for mathematics,* yet the satire in Gulliver is rather aimed against the abuse of philosophical science than at its reality. The projectors in the academy of Laputa are described as pretenders, who had acquired a very slight tincture of real mathematical knowledge, and eked out their plans of mechanical improvement by dint of whim and fancy. The age in which Swift lived had exhibited numerous instances of persons of this description, by whom many of the numerous *bubbles*, as they were emphatically termed, had been set on foot, to the impoverishment of credulous individuals, and the general detriment of the community. In ridiculing this class of projectors, whose character was divided between self-confidence in their own chimeras, and a wish to impose upon others, Swift, who peculiarly hated them,† has borrowed several illustrations, and perhaps the general idea, from Rabelais, Book v. cap. xxiii., where Pantagruel inspects the occupations of the courtiers of Quinte-Essence, Queen of Entelechie.

The professors of speculative learning are represented as engaged in prosecution of what was then termed Natural and Mathematical Magic, studies not grounded upon sound principles, or traced out and ascertained by experiment, but hovering between science and mysticism. Such are the renowned pursuits of alchemy—

his head reclined upon his right, sunk in such a fit of abstraction, that he was obliged, after calling him once or twice, actually to jog him, before he could awake his attention. This was precisely the office of the flapper.

* Though Swift disliked mathematics, it was not for want of capacity for that science. He one day affirmed to Sheridan, that it was an easy study; and, in consequence of a dispute with his friend upon that subject, Sheridan gave him a problem to solve. He desired Sheridan to leave the room; and in about half an hour the Dean called out to him, *heureka, heureka*. Sheridan assured Mrs. Whiteway that Swift had resolved the problem in the clearest manner, though he, who was himself a good mathematician, had chosen on purpose, a very difficult one.

† Recollecting, perhaps, the ruin of his uncle Godwin. See p. 8.

Digitized by Google

the composition of brazen images that could speak; of wooden birds that could fly; of powders of sympathy, and salves, which were applied, not to the wound, but to the weapon by which it was inflicted; of vials of essence, which could manure acres of land, and all similar marvels, of which impostors propagated the fame, and which dupes believed to their cost. The machine of the worthy professor of Lagado, for improving speculative knowledge, and composing books on all subjects, without the least assistance from genius or knowledge, seems to be designed in ridicule of the art invented by Raimond Lully, and advanced by his sage commentators; the mechanical process, namely, by which, according to Cornelius Agrippa, (himself no mean follower of Lully,) "everye man might plentifullye dispute of what matter he wolde, and with a certain artificial and huge heap of nownes and verbes invente and dispute with ostentation, full of trifling deceites upon both sides."* A reader might have supposed himself transported to the grand academy of Lagado when he read of this "Brief and great art of invention and demonstration," which consisted in adjusting the subject to be treated of according to a machine composed of divers circles, fixed and moveable. The principal circle was fixed, and inscribed with the substances of all things that may be treated of, arranged under general heads, as GOD, ANGEL, EARTH, HEAVEN, MAN, ANIMAL, &c. Another circle was placed within it, which is moveable, bearing inscribed thereon what logicians call the accidents, as QUANTITY, QUALITY, RELATION, &c. Other circles again contained the predicates absolute and relative, &c. and the forms of the questions; and, by turning the circles, so as to bring the various attributes to bear upon the question proposed, there was effected a species of mechanical logic, which, it cannot be doubted, was in Swift's mind when he described the celebrated machine for making books. Various refinements upon this mechanical mode of composition and ratiocination were contrived for the

* Cornelius Agrippa of the Vanity of Sciences, Englished by Ja. San. Gent. London, 1575.

Digitized by Google

purpose of improving this Art of Arts, as it was termed. Kircher, the teacher of an hundred arts, modernized and refitted the machine of Lully. Kaittel, the Jesuit, composed, on the same system, his Royal Road to all sciences and arts; Brunus invented the art of logic on the same mechanical plan; and Kuhlman makes our very hair bristle, by announcing such a machine as should contain, not only the art of knowledge, comprehending a general system of all sciences, but the various arts of acquiring languages, of commentary, of criticism, of history, sacred and profane, of biography of every kind, not to mention a library of libraries, comprehending the essence of all the books that ever were written. When it was gravely announced by a learned author, in tolerable Latinity, that all this knowledge was to be acquired by the art of a mechanical instrument, much resembling a child's whirligig, it was time for the satirist to assume the pen. It was not real science, therefore, which Swift attacked, but those chimerical and spurious studies with which the name has been sometimes disgraced. In the department of the political projectors, we have some glances of his Tory feelings; and when we read the melancholy account of the Struldbrugs, we are affectingly reminded of the author's contempt of life,* and the miserable state in which his own was at length prolonged.

The Voyage to the Land of the Houyhnhnms is a composition an editor of Swift must ever consider with pain. The source of such a diatribe against human nature could only be, that fierce indignation which he has described in his epitaph as so long gnawing his heart. Dwelling in a land where he considered the human race as divided between petty tyrants and oppressed slaves,

* For many years he used to bid his friends adieu with these melancholy words: "God bless you, I hope we shall never meet again." Upon one occasion, when he and another clergyman had just removed from beneath a large and heavy mirror, the cords which supported it suddenly gave way, and it fell with great violence. The clergyman burst forth into an exclamation of thankfulness for their narrow escape. "Had I been alone," said Swift, "I could have wished I had not removed."

Digitized by Google

and being himself a worshipper of that freedom and independence which he beheld daily trampled upon, the unrestrained violence of his feelings drove him to loathe the very species by whom such iniquity was done and suffered. To this must be added, his personal health, broken and worn down by the recurring attacks of a frightful disorder; his social comfort destroyed by the death of one beloved object, and the daily decay and peril of another; his life decayed into autumn, and its remainder, after so many flattering and ambitious prospects, condemned to a country which he disliked, and banished from that in which he had formed his hopes, and left his friendships:—when all these considerations are combined, they form some excuse for that general misanthropy which never prevented a single deed of individual benevolence. Such apologies are personal to the author, but there are also excuses for the work itself. The picture of the Yahoos, utterly odious and hateful as it is, presents to the reader a moral use. It was never designed as a representation of mankind in the state to which religion, and even the lights of nature, encourage men to aspire, but of that to which our species is degraded by the wilful subservience of mental qualities to animal instincts, of man, such as he may be found in the degraded ranks of every society, when brutalized by ignorance and gross vice. In this view, the more coarse and disgusting the picture, the more impressive is the moral to be derived from it, since, in proportion as an individual indulges in sensuality, cruelty, or avarice, he approaches in resemblance to the detested Yahoo.

It cannot, however, be denied, that even a moral purpose will not justify the nakedness with which Swift has sketched this horrible outline of mankind degraded to a bestial state; since a moralist ought to hold, with the Romans, that crimes of atrocity should be exposed when punished, but those of flagitious impurity concealed. In point of probability, too, for there are degrees of probability proper even to the wildest fiction, the fourth part of Gulliver is inferior to the three others. Giants and pigmies the reader can conceive; for, not to men-

Digitized by Google

tion their being the ordinary machinery of romance, we are accustomed to see, in the inferior orders of creation, a disproportion of size between those of the same generic description, which may parallel (among some reptile tribes at least) even the fiction of Gulliver. But the mind rejects, as utterly impossible, the supposition of a nation of horses placed in houses which they could not build, fed with corn which they could neither sow, reap, nor save, possessing cows which they could not milk, depositing that milk in vessels which they could not make, and, in short, performing an hundred purposes of rational and social life, for which their external structure altogether unfits them.*

But under every objection, whether founded in reason or prejudice, the Travels of Gulliver were received with the most universal interest, merited indeed by their novelty, as well as their internal merit. Lucian, Rabelais, More, Bergerac, Alletz, and many other authors, had indeed composed works, in which may be traced such general resemblance as arises from the imaginary voyage of a supposed traveller to ideal realms. But every Utopia which had hitherto been devised, was upon a plan either extravagant from its puerile fictions, or dull from the speculative legislation of which the story was made the vehicle.† It was reserved for Swift to enliven the morality of his work with humour; to relieve its absurdity with satire; and to give the most improbable events an appearance of reality, derived from the character and style of the narrator. Even Robinson Crusoe (though detailing events so much more probable) hardly excels Gulliver in gravity and verisimilitude of narrative. The character of the imaginary traveller is exactly that of Dampier, or any other sturdy nautical wanderer of the period, endowed with cour-

* See Delany's Remarks, p. 167.

† Boyle too, from a passage in his Occasional Reflections on Several Subjects, appears to have meditated a "romantic story of an Utopia in the Southern ocean, a native whereof should travel to Europe, and on his return give an account of European customs and manners." But this would have rather resembled the Lettres Persannes of Montesquieu, than the Travels of Gulliver.

Digitized by Google

age and common sense, who sailed through distant seas, without losing a single English prejudice which he had brought from Portsmouth or Plymouth, and on his return gave a grave and simple narrative of what he had seen or heard in foreign countries. The character is strictly English, and can be hardly relished by a foreigner.* The reflections and observations of Gulliver are never more refined or deeper than might be expected from a plain master of a merchant-man, or surgeon in the Old Jewry; and there was such a reality given to his whole person, that one seaman is said to have sworn he knew Captain Gulliver very well, but he lived at Wapping, not at Rotherhithe. It is the contrast between the natural ease and simplicity of such a style and the marvels which the volume contains, that forms one great charm of this memorable satire on the imperfections, follies, and vices of mankind. The exact calculations preserved in the first and second part, have also the effect of qualifying the extravagance of the fable. It is said that in natural objects, where proportion is exactly preserved, the marvellous, whether the object be gigantic or diminutive, is lessened in the eyes of the spectator, and it is certain, in general, that proportion forms an essential attribute of truth, and consequently of verisimilitude, or that which renders a narration probable. If the reader is disposed to grant the traveller his postulates as to the existence of the strange people whom he visits, it would be difficult to detect any inconsistence in his narrative. On the contrary, it would seem that Gulliver and they conduct themselves towards each other precisely as must necessarily have happened in the respective circumstances which the author has supposed. In this point of view, perhaps the highest praise that could have been bestowed on Gulliver's Travels was the censure of a learned Irish

* The French translator accordingly thought it necessary to enliven so dull a narrative, by some of the flippant brilliancy of a French writer of memoirs. The French received the work at first but indifferently; but it became very popular when its humour was better understood. So the Abbé Borleau informed Spence. See the Anecdotes, p. 136.

Digitized by Google

prelate, who said the book contained *some* things which he could not prevail upon himself to believe. It is a remarkable point of the author's art, that, in Lilliput and Brobdignag, Gulliver seems gradually, from the influence of the images by which he was surrounded, to lose his own ideas of comparative size, and to adopt those of the pigmies and giants by whom he was surrounded. And, without further prolonging these reflections, I would only request the reader to notice the infinite art with which human actions are divided between these two opposite races of ideal beings, so as to enhance the keenness of the satire. In Lilliput political intrigue and *tracasserie*, the chief employment of the highest ranks in Europe, are ridiculed by being transferred to a court of creatures about six inches high. But in Brobdignag, female levities, and the lighter follies of a court, are rendered monstrous and disgusting, by being attributed to a race of such tremendous stature. By these, and a thousand masterly touches of which we feel the effect, though we cannot trace the cause without a long analysis, the genius of Swift converted the sketch of an extravagant fairy tale into a narrative, unequalled for the skill with which it is sustained, and the genuine spirit of satire of which it is made the vehicle.*

The renown of Gulliver's travels soon extended into other kingdoms. Voltaire, who was at this time in England, spread their fame among his correspondents in France, and recommended a translation. The Abbé Desfontaines undertook the task, but with so many doubts, apprehensions and apologies, as make his introduction a curious picture of the mind and opinions of a French man of letters. He admits, that he was conscious of offending against rules; and, while he

* At a late period of Swift's life, he undertook a revision of Gulliver's Travels, and made some bitter additions wherever the law or its professors are mentioned. The volume bearing these corrections, passed from the possession of Mr. Theophilus Swift into that of the Bishop of Ossory; but it is said that all or most of the alterations have been transferred to the later editions, so that it is now matter of curiosity alone.

Digitized by Google

modestly craves some mercy for the prodigious fictions which he had undertaken to clothe in the French language, he confesses, that there were passages at which his pen escaped his hand, from actual horror and astonishment at the daring violations of all critical decorum: then he becomes alarmed, lest some of Swift's political satire might be applied to the court of Versailles, and protests, with much circumlocution, that it only concerns the *Toriz*, and *Wigts*, as he is pleased to term them, of the factious kingdom of Britain. Lastly, he assures his readers, that not only has he changed many of the incidents, to accommodate them to the French taste, but, moreover, they will not be annoyed, in his translation, with the nautical details, and minute particulars, so offensive in the original. Notwithstanding all this affectation of superior taste and refinement, the French translation is very tolerable. It is true, the Abbé Desfontaines indemnified himself and the French public, by writing a continuation of the Travels, in a style, as may easily be conceived, very different from that of the original.* Another continuation (a pretended third volume) was published in England, the most impudent combination of piracy and forgery that ever occurred in the literary world; for while the

* Desfontaines' continuation is entitled "Le Nouveau Gulliver," being the Travels of John, the son of the celebrated Captain Lemuel Gulliver. They have no more relation to the original, than the Telemaque of Fenelon has to the Odyssey. He has avoided the bold and irregular fictions, the hardy and satirical morality, the natural and minute narrative of Swift. Jean Gulliver is merely an uninteresting *voyageur imaginaire*, who travels into one country, where the females were the ruling sex; into another, where the life of the inhabitants was ephemeral; into a third, where ugliness was the subject of desire and admiration. Though sinking far below the originality and spirit of his model, Desfontaines' work displays some fancy and talent. The author long conducted the Journal des Sçavans, and was engaged in some controversies with Voltaire, which did little honour to either party. The Abbé Desfontaines died in 1745. A letter from him to Swift, on the subject of his translation, with Swift's reply, may be found in Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. p. 125. He apologizes for the retrenchments and alterations which he found necessary to adapt Gulliver to the taste of the French nation. The Dean scarcely admits the apology in his answer, p. 129. The translation succeeded extremely well with the French public.

Digitized by Google

book was affirmed to be written by the author of the genuine Gulliver, it was not even the work of his imitator, being almost entirely stolen from an obscure French work, called "L'Histoire des Severambes."* Besides these continuations, a work thus completely successful failed not to be attended by imitations, parodies, keys, verses commendatory and defamatory, and the whole accompaniments of a popular triumph,† not

* The THIRD VOLUME of Gulliver's Travels was published by this unblushing forger so early as 1727, without a printer's name. It is executed in the same form with the genuine work, but is a mere bookseller's catch-penny. The author sends Gulliver on a second voyage to Brobdignag, but, soon tiring of the task of original composition, however little genius was expended in it, he fills the remainder of the volume with the unacknowledged plunder of a French *Voyage Imaginaire*, entitled, Histoire des Severambes, which, in the work entitled Melanges tirés d'une grande Bibliotheque, is ascribed to Monsieur Alletz. The work was suppressed in France, and other Catholic kingdoms, on account of the deistical opinions which it expressed, and being therefore of rare occurrence, offered facilities for the bare-faced plagiarism and forgery of the author of the third volume of Gulliver.

† Dr. Arbuthnot wrote two pamphlets on the subject, one entitled "Gulliver Decyphered, or remarks upon a late book of Travels into several remote nations of the world, vindicating the reverend Dean, on whom it is maliciously fathered, with some probable conjectures concerning the real author." The piece, which has not much of Arbuthnot's humour, is published in his works, London, 1770, Vol. I. He also published "Critical Remarks on Captain Gulliver's Travels, by Dr. Bentley." In this piece of raillery, the author labours to show, that the land of the Houyhnhnms was known to the ancients, and quotes, among other proofs of his assertion the following imitation from Chaucer:—

Certes qd John, I not denye,
That touchende of the Stedes countrye;
I rede as thylke old cronyke seythe,
Ylong afore our chrysten feythe;
Ther ben, as ye shall understande,
An yle ycleped Coursers Londe,
Wher nis ne dampnynge covetyse;
Ne lechere hot in sainctes gise;
Ne sely squire lycke browdred ape,
Who maken Goddes boke a jape;
Ne lemman-vyle mishandlinge youthe;
Ne wemen, bruckle ware in sothe;
Ne flattrer; ne unlettred clerke,
Who richen him withouten werke;
For vyce in thought, ne als in dede,
Was never known in Londe of Stede.

Digitized by Google

forgetting a slave in the chariot, whose abuse and ribaldry might remind the exulting author he was still a man.

The publication of the Travels, as giving fresh and additional notoriety to the author, served to increase his favour at Leicester House. Many pieces of mutual politeness were exchanged, and much raillery on the subject of Gulliver, the Yahoos, and the Lilliputians. At leaving England, Swift had requested from the princess and Mrs. Howard, a trifling present, taxing the former at ten pounds, and the latter at one guinea, as a memorial of the distinction which they seemed to place between him and an ordinary clergyman. The princess promised a present of medals, which was never fulfilled. Mrs. Howard, more true of promise, sent Swift a ring and a letter, which he answered by a letter in the character of Gulliver, accompanied with a golden trinket in the shape of a crown, to represent the diadem of Lilliput.* The princess condescended to accept from the Dean a piece of Irish silk for her own wearing, a point of obligation to which his correspondence recurs rather too frequently after their breach. Every thing seemed to intimate, that in case of the prince's succession to the crown, Gulliver (to use the words of Peterborow) had but to chalk his pumps, and learn to dance on the tight rope, and he might yet be a bishop.

While the Travels were printing in silence and mystery, Pope was busied with the projected Miscellanies. Nothing could exceed the generous and good humoured frankness with which Swift abandoned his verses to his friend's criticism, entreating him to correct, to burn, and to blot, without favour. He showed himself as tractable in his years of full-blown fame, as when in

Three poems in the Miscellany, the Lamentation of Glumdalclitch, Mary Gulliver's epistle to her husband, and a Lilliputian Ode, Swift's Works, Vol. XIII. p. 358, 361, 365, were also occasioned by the celebrated Travels. They have been ascribed to Gay, but were certainly written by Pope. See his letter, 8th March 1726-7, Ibid. Vol. XVII. p. 104.

* This toy is still preserved by Mrs. Howard's representatives.

Digitized by Google

ger years, at the instance of Addison, he erased rses, added forty verses, and altered a like number, in the short poem of Baucis and Philemon. In the middle of March, the Miscellany was published, with the cipher of the two friends combined on the title-page, and Pope rejoiced in the joint volumes in which they were to walk hand in hand down to posterity. He had also reason to congratulate himself in point of emolument, for the sale was so rapid, that the two first volumes were speedily followed by a third, and the profit, of which the Dean resigned the whole to him, was considerable.* A yet more important donation was the copy-right of Gulliver, which Pope sold for the sum of three hundred pounds. The publication of the Miscellany had some less pleasing consequences. The treatise upon the Bathos, and the examples compiled from living poets, drew upon the allied authors a hail-storm of petty lampoons and libels from the aggrieved parties, under which Pope writhed, though Swift despised and overlooked them.

Stella had now apparently recovered a tolerable state of health, and, in the month of March 1727, Swift visited England for the last time. His reception at Leicester House was as cordial as ever, but there were no traces of that apparent spirit of accommodation with which Walpole had formerly received him. The minister had, during the Dean's absence, gone so far as to express to Pope his desire of having seen Swift again before he left England, and his having observed a willingness in him to live there.† Upon this overture he probably expected something to have been proposed or asked by the Dean. The hint, however, was not taken: and Walpole's communication on the subject with Pope plainly shows the absurdity of the allegation, that Swift had offered his services, and that these services had been rejected. On the contrary, it is evident that the Dean, however desirous of being removed to England, was so far from stooping to solicit

* Amounting at least to one hundred and fifty pounds.
† Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. p. 53.

Digitized by Google

it as a favour, that he did not even seek another interview with Walpole, though it was indirectly offered, for the sake of stating his wishes more plainly. Walpole, offended by his indifference, little gratified, probably, by the hints in the Travels to Lilliput, now broke off all communication.* Perhaps, also, he considered Swift as

* The story has been retailed with more or less credible circumstances, according to the faith of the narrator. Lord Chesterfield, probably with a view of mystifying his credulous audience, pretended that Chartres (whom Swift regarded with the utmost abhorrence) acted as master of the ceremonies when the Dean of St. Patrick's offered to barter his political faith for church preferment. To the utter improbability of this tale in itself, it may be added, that we know, from Swift's correspondence, that he met with Walpole only twice,—once by invitation to dinner, and once at an audience upon the public business of Ireland, when he was introduced by Lord Peterborow. A more modest edition of the legend bears, that Swift only indicated his wishes to the minister by pointing to a tree which was bearing down the wall against which it leaned, and observed, that he, like that tree, needed support; an attack which Walpole parried, by answering, "Then why, Doctor, did you attach yourself to a falling wall?" A third statement transfers the simile of the tree, with some variation, to Walpole. Swift is said bluntly to have asked Sir Robert to remove him, for God's sake, from that wretched country of Ireland, and the minister replied by pointing to a fruit-tree, which, he said, was ruined by being transplanted from a hungry soil to a richer one. Both these last stories would imply a wish, on the part of Walpole, to refuse Swift's request with irony and sarcasm, which is altogether inconsistent with the opening which he held out to Pope. It must be added, that Mr. Coxe, though abundantly severe upon Swift, in general, makes no mention of any such disgraceful transactions as are charged upon him by these stories. See the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole. Among some miscellaneous jottings on a loose paper in Swift's hand-writing, found among Dr. Lyons' papers, occurs the following: "Sir Robert Walpole defended the scheme of Wood to the Dean before he asked him his thoughts about it."

The ingenious Editor of the Suffolk papers has stated a hypothesis which may have created a misunderstanding of Swift's purpose on the part of Walpole, which accounted for subsequent misrepresentation. Swift spoke to Sir Robert of the difficulty of obliterating any unfavourable impression made on the mind of a prince or great minister, even when the accusation that proved it has been totally disproved. Swift certainly was thinking of Gay, Walpole believed that he spoke in reference to himself, and thus gave the passage a turn which the Dean did not deserve, and represented Swift as having made apologies on his own account.—Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. p. 391.

Digitized by Google

privately caballing with Pulteney and Bolingbroke, perhaps having found the road to the prince's good graces, through the interest of the princess, he chose to keep no measures with the little band of literary friends who had attached themselves to Mrs. Howard. Swift had previously intimated, that, if he was not better treated by the minister this year than the last, he would take vengeance; and accordingly, within a few weeks after his arrival in England, we find him engaged in a paper to be sent to the Craftsman, the general channel for assault upon Walpole.* In this epistle, which was never finished, he touches upon "the grievous mistake, in a great minister, to neglect or despise, much more to irritate men of genius and learning," which was probably his own immediate cause of resentment. About this time, too, Swift is supposed to have supplied Gay with the two celebrated songs, after engrafted in the Beggar's Opera, beginning, "Through all the employments of life," and, "Since laws were made for every degree." Warton has assigned both to Pope, but the internal evidence is in favour of Mr. Deane Swift and Mrs. Whiteway, who uniformly declared they were written by the Dean.†

After a summer spent among the friends of his best days, Swift began to resume his intention of passing the winter in a milder climate, as it was supposed the air of the south of France might mitigate the distressing symptoms of his recurring disorder. The king's death,

* "A Letter to the Writer of the Occasional Paper." Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 100. In a letter from Bolingbroke to Swift, dated 18th May 1727, he gives some hints for this epistle, which the author seems to have adopted. See Vol. XVII. p. 110, and compare what is there suggested with the "Letter," Vol. XII. p. 103.

† Swift never saw the Beggar's Opera in a complete state until it was printed; but it does not follow that he contributed no songs. He is generally supposed to have given the hint of the subject, by suggesting to Gay to write a Newgate pastoral. While these three wits, indeed, held their meetings at Twickenham, it may be difficult to assign to each individual his share in a labour which they were all willing to further. Mrs. Whiteway said the Dean also suggested the Trivia, which is rendered very probable, since his habits of walking, and his verses on the City-Shower, showed him to be master both of the subject and manner.

Digitized by Google

and the probable dismissal of Walpole from office, interrupted his purpose, and lighted up, for the last time, those hopes of comfort at least, if not of ambition, which depended on his being settled in England. A change of ministry was generally expected. Swift, accustomed to disappointment, was less sanguine than others, and hesitated whether he should suspend his journey to the continent. Bolingbroke urged him to remain, and expressed his belief, that the opportunity of quitting England for Ireland was fairly before him. He remained, accordingly, kissed the hands of their majesties on their accession, and was received by the queen with her usual marks of favour. But Sir Robert Walpole, through the interest of Queen Caroline, triumphed over all his rivals, and on the 24th June was reinstated in the employments and confidence which he enjoyed under the former monarch. Still, however, it was supposed, that the secret influence of Mrs. Howard might serve her friends. Swift wrote to her requesting her advice concerning his intention of going abroad, and conjuring her to answer him with sincerity. Mrs. Howard replied, exhorting him not to leave England, as it would have an appearance of disaffection; and other friends seemed to have authority from her to hint, that his favourite object of an exchange into England might yet be practicable. Sir Robert Walpole's interest, and probably that of Queen Caroline, who in secret opposed all who sought favours at Court through the mediation of Mrs. Howard, rendered vain the expectations which were thus excited. Mrs. Howard afterwards vindicated herself, by stating, that if success did not justify her advice, she had at least given the reasons on which it was founded, so that Swift, having opportunity of judging for himself of its solidity, was the dupe of his own judgment, not of her falsehood. But the Dean seems to have felt that his dignity had suffered in thus lingering around the court, waiting for a favour which his enemies had a malicious pleasure in withholding. His resentment rankled within him, and extended itself not only to Walpole and the queen, but to Mrs. Howard,

Digitized by Google

who seems in reality to have wanted the power, not the inclination to serve him.*

During this anxious interval, Swift was afflicted with a severe paroxysm of his disorder, and about the same time received news from Ireland, that Stella was once more reduced to extremity. The agony with which these tidings affected him, induced him suddenly to leave Twickenham, where he was then residing, and shut himself up in lodgings in London, miserably afflicted both in body and mind.† He wrote to Sheridan and Worrall in the bitterest sorrow, anticipating the dissolution of "that person for whose sake only life was worth preserving." Yet with stubborn adherence to his determination of concealing their union, he conjures Worrall so to arrange, that her decease might not take place at the deanery, which Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Dingley always occupied in his absence. He had enemies, he said, who would interpret such an event injuriously to his character. When his health was a little restored, he departed for Ireland. He took by letter a civil leave

* The Earl of Orford relates, in his Reminiscences, that, as a test of the degree of influence which Mrs. Howard actually possessed, she was persuaded by Chesterfield to ask of the new monarch an earl's coronet for Lord Bathurst. She did so—the queen interposed her veto—and Swift returned to Ireland in despair, convinced that Mrs. Howard had no efficient interest with the monarch. The Editor of the Suffolk papers disproves this representation, by showing that in the first creation of peers Lady Howard's interest procured a coronet for her own brother, which renders it highly improbable that her influence was in the wane, or that she could then have made a point of Lord Bathurst's promotion. Besides, Swift returned to Ireland in September 1727, and the creation did not take place until 28th May 1728. Suffolk Correspondence, Introduction, p. 24, 25.

† Dr. Johnson has given this circumstance a malevolent turn: "He left the house of Pope, as it seems, with very little ceremony, finding that two sick friends cannot live together, and did not write to him till he found himself at Chester." Sinking, as he himself declares, under weakness, age, and wounded affection, Swift might have claimed some exemption from ceremony. But Pope saw Swift at his lodgings in London, as he himself writes to Sheridan, more than once at least; and when the Dean left England, he took leave of Pope in a kind letter, not written from Chester, but left for him at Gay's lodgings, over which he to whom it was addressed, "wept like a girl." Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. pp. 145, 149.

Digitized by Google

of Mrs. Howard, and transmitted his duty to the queen. To Pope he wrote in the most affectionate terms. "If it pleases God," he said, "to restore me to my health, I shall readily make a third journey; if not, we must part as all human creatures have parted." Such, indeed, was the decree of Heaven, for these illustrious friends met no more. The Dean left the country so dearly beloved by him, for the last time, in the beginning of October 1727.

When Swift arrived in Ireland, Stella was on the verge of the grave. For six months she had been only preserved by constant medical attendance and support. In this languishing state, she had a remarkable conversation with Swift upon the subject of declaring their marriage, which has been interpreted in a manner highly prejudicial to the character of the latter, as if he had been guilty of the most sullen cruelty towards the friend whose decay cost him such daily agony, and for whose spiritual consolation he composed the most beautiful and affecting devotional exercises. I give it with every circumstance, as nearly as possible, in the words of Mr. Theophilus Swift, to whom it was communicated by Mrs. Whiteway. "When Stella was in her last weak state, and one day had come in a chair to the deanery, she was with difficulty brought into the parlour. The dean had prepared some mulled wine, and kept it by the fire for her refreshment. After tasting it, she became very faint, but, having recovered a little by degrees, when her breath (for she was asthmatic) was allowed her, she desired to lie down. She was carried up stairs, and laid on a bed: the Dean sitting by her, held her hand, and addressed her in the most affectionate manner. She drooped, however, very much. Mrs. Whiteway was the only third person present. After a short time, her politeness induced her to withdraw to the adjoining room, but it was necessary, on account of air, that the door should not be closed: it was half shut,—the rooms were close adjoining. Mrs. Whiteway had too much honour to listen, but could not avoid observing, that the Dean and Mrs. Johnson conversed together in a low tone; the latter, indeed, was

Digitized by Google

too weak to raise her voice. Mrs. Whiteway paid no attention, having no idle curiosity, but at length she heard the Dean say, in an audible voice, '*Well, my dear, if you wish it, it shall be owned,*' to which Stella answered with a sigh, '*It is too late.*'" Such are, upon the best and most respectable authority, the minute particulars of this remarkable anecdote. The word *marriage* was not mentioned, but there can remain no doubt that such was the secret to be owned; and the report of Mrs. Whiteway I received with pleasure, as vindicating the Dean from the charge of cold-blooded and hard-hearted cruelty to the unfortunate Stella, when on the verge of existence.* On 28th January 1727-8, about eight

* Mr. Sheridan has related this anecdote in the following terms: "A short time before her death, a scene passed between the Dean and her, an account of which I had from my father, and which I shall relate with reluctance, as it seems to bear more hard on Swift's humanity than any other part of his conduct in life. As she found her final dissolution approach, a few days before it happened, in the presence of Dr. Sheridan, she addressed Swift in the most earnest and pathetic terms to grant her dying request; 'That, as the ceremony of marriage had passed between them, though for sundry considerations they had not cohabited in that state, in order to put it out of the power of slander to be busy with her fame after death, she adjured him by their friendship to let her have the satisfaction of dying at least, though she had not lived, his acknowledged wife.'

"Swift made no reply, but turning on his heel, walked silently out of the room, nor ever saw her afterward during the few days she lived. This behaviour threw Mrs. Johnson into unspeakable agonies, and for a time she sunk under the weight of so cruel a disappointment. But soon after, roused by indignation, she inveighed against his cruelty in the bitterest terms; and, sending for a lawyer, made her will, bequeathing her fortune by her own name to charitable uses. This was done in the presence of Dr. Sheridan, whom she appointed one of her executors."

It cannot be denied that there is here an anecdote told upon apparently good authority. But Mr. Theophilus Swift's authority seems still preferable. It was derived from Mrs. Whiteway after he attained the years of manhood, and Mr. Sheridan was a boy at the time of his father's death; and although neither father nor son were capable of voluntarily propagating a falsehood to the Dean's prejudice, yet it seems more likely that a boy might have mistaken what his father said to him on such a subject, than that Mr. Swift should have misunderstood a story told to him repeatedly and minutely by Mrs. Whiteway, after he had come to man's estate. In fact, the hardness of heart imputed to Swift, by the earlier edition

Digitized by Google

o'clock at night, Mrs. Johnson closed her weary pilgrimage, and passed to that land where they neither marry nor are given in marriage.

Swift was now in a manner alone in the world, afflicted by many of those varied calamities, with which, to use his own words, the author of our being weans us gradually from our fondness of life, the nearer we approach the end of it. Disease and decay of nature,—the death of many friends, and the estrangement or ingratitude of more,—a want of relish for earthly enjoyments, with a general dislike for persons and things, daily increasing upon him;—passions too readily irritable, and the keen sensation of remorse, after having extravagantly indulged them;—all these evils combined to darken his future prospect; and the gleams of cheerfulness and enjoyment which yet occasionally gilded his way, grew fewer and more languid as his path tended downwards, until he reached the sad point, beyond which all was second childishness and mere oblivion. There remained to him, indeed, the applause of the public, and the society of many sincere and respectful friends, in the land of which he was now unwillingly an inhabitant for life. But the former could give no balm for domestic affliction, and most of the latter had been so much accustomed to submit to his humour, and endure practical and personal jests, that either he was nettled by their resentment when he pushed their patience beyond endurance, or, while humoured to the very extremity of caprice, became sensible, that excess of familiarity was followed by contempt, its usual consequence.* He was banished, in short, from Pope, Bo-

of the story, is not only totally inconsistent with an affection agonized by the view of its dying object, but with every circumstance. Vanessa was dead,—Stella was dying,—the Dean could no longer fear that the society or claims of a wife should be forced upon him,—the scene wes closed, and every reason for mystery at an end. The relations may indeed be reconciled, by supposing that of Mrs. Whiteway subsequent to the scene detailed by Sheridan. The Dean may at length have relented, yet Sheridan remained ignorant of it. Dr. Johnson seems to have received the anecdote as given in the text.

* The Dean was fond of pranks which bordered on childish sports. It will hardly be believed that he sometimes, by way of

Digitized by Google

lingbroke, Arbuthnot, and his original compeers, with whom he measured mind against mind, learned to respect himself in respecting them, and felt no other superiority than might arise from a momentary advantage in argument.*

exercise, use to chase the Grattans, and other accommodating friends, through the large apartments of the deanery, and up and down stairs, driving them like horses, with his whip in his hand, till he had accomplished his usual quantity of exercise. I have heard there was an old gentleman, a Scot, or of Scottish extraction, settled in the north of Ireland, whom he used to teaze with some story of the dirt and poverty of his country, till the old man, between jest and earnest, started up with his cane uplifted, when Swift, in great seeming terror, would run away to hide himself. His practical jokes he sometimes pushed beyond even the patience of the good-natured Sheridan, and then was angry with him for not enduring what no man ought to have wished a friend to brook. The Dean's answer, for instance, to Sheridan's rhymes on Ballyspellin, (Swift's Works, Vol. XV. p. 136,) was so coarse and vulgar, (printed, too, and published,) that Sheridan considered it as an affront on himself, and the lady he had accompanied to that watering-place. Yet the Dean, in his character of the second Solomon, resents his very natural and just indignation, as an act of high treason against his authority, or, as he styles it, "against all the rules of reason, taste, good-nature, judgment, gratitude, or common manners." Ibid. Vol. IX. p. 320.

* In these melancholy moments he seems to have drawn up the following list of remarkable and illustrious persons, with whom he had lived in intimacy at various periods of his life. The original is among the papers preserved by Mr. Smith :—

"Men famous for their learning, wit, or great employments or quality, of my acquaintance, who are dead.—

Sir William Temple,	Lord Willoughby of Brook, Dean of Windsor,
Lord Sommers,	Duke of Beaufort,
Earl of Halifax,	Earl of Berkeley,
Burnet, Bishop of Sarum,	Anthony Henley,
Mr. Wycherly,	Earl of Oxford, lord-treasurer,
Mr. Nich. Rowe,	Lord Harcourt, lord-chancellor,
Mr. Addison,	Dr. John Freind,
Dr. Garth,	Dr. Ratcliffe,
Sir John Vanbrug,	Mr. Congreve,
Dr. Smalridge, Bishop of Bristol.	Mr. Prior.
Dr. Gastril, Bishop of Chester,	
Dr. Biss, Bishop of Hereford,	

"Men of distinction, and my friends, who are yet alive. February 19, 1728-9.—

Earl of Peterborow,	Mr. Gay,
Duke of Ormonde,	Earl of Orkney,

Digitized by Google

Ambition is often smothered when deprived of hope, but its restless ghost seldom fails to haunt those whom it has called vassals, and to excite them to animosity or vengeance, even after hope is no more. Swift, accordingly, after the death of Stella, seems first to have been roused by the sense of Walpole's enmity. It was greatly increased by the conduct of Queen Caroline and the minister towards Gay. The promise of her majesty's patronage could not decently be withdrawn from the poet, but, as if to mark her altered opinion, and even contempt, he was named gentleman-usher to the Princess Louisa, then an infant. Gay, with proper spirit, refused the appointment, and, in the Beggars' Opera, took a most ample satisfaction upon king, queen, and ministers. This marked affront to his friend opened Swift's eyes, if he yet hoped any thing, either from the queen's favour, or the influence of Mrs. Howard.*

In this humour he composed the celebrated Rhapsody, (1733,) in which the ironical praises which he bestowed on the monarch, queen, and royal family, were taken in such good part, that he assured Dr. King he received a message of thanks. "The Rhapsody," says the doctor, "might have continued to Swift the favour it had acquired him, if Lord Harvey had not undeceived Queen Caroline, and taken some pains to teach her the use and power of the irony."† Although a friend to the Protestant succession, he had never regarded with much cordiality the family on which the crown was settled; and when there was a report that George I. intended to publish, or sue out a divorce against his un-

Earl of Marr,
Lord Viscount Bolingbroke,
Lord Bathurst,
Earl of Burlington,
Lord Masham,
William Pulteney, Esq.
Dr. Arbuthnot,
Mr. Pope,
Lord Carteret,
Earl of Dartmouth,
Lord Bingley, [dead]
William Bromley, Esq.
Earl of Pembroke,
Lord Herbert,
Sir Andrew Fountain.

* Yet Gay's causes of complaint are something overrated by his friends. See on this subject the Introduction to the Suffolk Correspondence.

† King's Anecdotes, p. 15.

Digitized by Google

fortunate consort, and declare a marriage with the Dutchess of Kendal, whom he is said to have married with the left hand,—the Dean made the perplexity of the ministers the subject of the bitterest epigram which his own or any other pen ever traced.* The attentions of Caroline, when princess, had suspended a dislike, which now returned with double bitterness. One of his modes of mortifying the royal family was, to cause a monument to be erected in the Cathedral of St. Patrick's, to the memory of the Duke of Schomberg, reflecting bitterly upon his descendants, who had declined being at this expense. The parties whom this inscription immediately affected, were the Earl of Holdernesse and Lord Fitzwalter; but it also touched upon the envoy of the King of Prussia, who, having married a grand-daughter of Schomberg, made a formal complaint to George I. The king expressed himself much displeased, and said publicly in the drawing-room, "that the Dean of St. Patrick's had put up that monument out of malice, to make a quarrel betwixt his Majesty and the King of Prussia." Thus, an irreconcilable breach took place between Swift and the court, as well as the ministers. On Walpole, Swift made war both in verse and prose, nor did he spare even royalty itself, for the "Directions for making a Birth-day Song" are most bitter upon the whole family, especially on Queen Caroline.†

While thus venting his resentment against the court, Swift continued to apply himself with great vigour to the national interests of Ireland, although so much dreaded and disliked by the government, that even his friend Carteret declined to admit him to any situation which could give him an official right of interference.‡

* It was found among Swift's papers, with this characteristic jotting on the back.—"A wicked treasonable libel. I wish I knew the author, that I might hang him."

† Swift's Works, Vol. XIV. p. 439.

‡ He never could prevail upon Lord Carteret to nominate him one of the trustees of the linen manufactory, or even a justice of peace. His lordship always replied, "I am sure, Mr. Dean, you despise those feathers, and would not accept of them." The Dean answered, "No, my lord, I do not, as I might be serviceable to the

Digitized by Google

But the patriotism of Swift was not to be damped by discouragement. In every varied form he endeavoured to make the people aware of their rights and interests, —the rulers of the impolicy, as well as cruelty, of their oppressive restrictions. The "View of the State of Ireland;" the "Story of an Injured Lady;" the Letter to the Archbishop of Dublin concerning the Weavers; the Answer to Sir John Brown's Memorial, and many other Tracts, contained in the Seventh Volume,* show his careful and unremitting attention to the rights and interests of Ireland, whether political, commercial, or agricultural.† But the inimitable piece of irony by which he proposes to relieve the distresses of the poor, by converting their children into food for the rich, has never been equalled in any age or country. The grave, formal, and business-like mode, in which the calculations are given; the projector's protestation of absolute disinterest in the success of his plan; the economy with which he proposes the middling class should use this new species of food; and the magnificence which he attaches to the idea of a well-grown fat yearling child

public in both capacities; but, as I would not be governed by your excellency, nor job at the board, or suffer abuses to pass there, or at a quarter-sessions' assizes, I know that you will not indulge me for the good of this unhappy nation: but, if I were a worthless member of Parliament, or a bishop, would vote for the court, and betray my country, then you would readily grant my request." Lord Carteret replied, with equal freedom and politeness, "What you say is literally true, and therefore you must excuse me." The Dean, some time afterwards, in company with Dr. Bolton, Archbishop of Cashel, Dr. Synge, Bishop of Elphin, and other trustees of the board, asked him why they would not elect him trustee. The archbishop answered, "That he was too sharp a razor, and would cut them all." To which the Dean made no reply. Swiftiana, Vol. II. p. 217.

* Of Swift's Works, to which these Memoirs are prefixed.

† His most trifling bounties were qualified with a view to the interest of Ireland. Giving one day a guinea to the maid-servant of a friend, he charged her to buy a gown of Irish stuff with his bounty. Returning afterwards and finding her in the same dress, he accused her of neglecting his orders. She went out and returned with her apron filled with a set of the Dean's works. "This," she said, "please your reverence, is the Irish stuff I have bought, and better was never manufactured." Swift, as may be supposed, was highly gratified.

Digitized by Google

roasted whole, for a lord-mayor's feast; the style of a projector, and the terms of the shambles, so coolly and yet carefully preserved from beginning to end, render it one of the most extraordinary pieces of humour in our language. A foreign author was so much imposed upon by the gravity of the style, that he quoted it as an instance of the extreme distress of Ireland, which appeared to equal that of Jerusalem in its last siege, since a dignitary of the church was reduced to propose, as the only mode of alleviating the general misery, the horrid resource of feeding upon the children of the poor.

This repeated interference of Swift seems greatly to have annoyed the faction by which Ireland was then ruled, nor was their displeasure always silent. The mayor and corporation having resolved to present the Dean with the freedom of the city in a golden box, Joshua, Lord Allen, although he had at one time courted the Dean's friendship, chose, in the council and House of Peers, to make a bitter invective against Swift, as a Tory, a Jacobite, and a libeller of the government; and publicly upbraided the mayor with wasting the money of the corporation in making presents to such a character. The Dean heard of this attack with the greater indignation, as, within a few hours after the invective had been pronounced, Lord Allen had sent a common friend to him with renewed protestations of regard. The mediator, finding other apologies ill received, at length said, touching his forehead, "You know, sir, our poor friend is a little disordered here at times."—"I know," answered the Dean, with great gravity, "that he is a madman; and, if that were all, no man living could commiserate his condition more than myself: but, sir, he is a madman possessed by the devil. I renounce him." Accordingly, he not only vindicated himself to the lord-mayor and corporation on occasion of receiving the freedom and gold box, in terms the most peremptory,* but also published, in an advertisement,† a contradiction of Lord Allen's

* Swift's Works, Vol. VII. p. 275. † Ibid. Vol. VII. p. 281.

Digitized by Google

charge, as "insolent, false, scandalous, malicious, and, in a particular degree, perfidious." Upon the same occasion he composed and published the satire entitled Traulus,* the first part of which is a dialogue turning upon the melancholy apology proposed for Allen by their common friend, Robert Leslie. And, on several other opportunities, the unfortunate peer was distinguished in the Dean's satirical productions.†

In order to maintain this skirmishing warfare, the Dean and Sheridan, in 1728, commenced a periodical paper called the Intelligencer. But the circulation being small, and the price of each number only a halfpenny, the printer could not afford to pay any young man of talent to act as editor, so that it was soon dropped. The Dean gives Pope an account of the papers which he wrote for the Intelligencer, in whole or in part, being nine in all.‡ Perhaps we ought to add some part at least of No. II., which the reader will find in the note, containing a singular account of an affront offered to Swift by Colonel Abel Ram, member of Parliament for the borough of Gorey, (called Squire Wether in the Intelligencer,) whose carriage intercepted Swift and Sheridan rudely, as they were travelling on horseback.§ On this occasion, Swift, or more

* Ibid. Vol. XII. p. 420.

† Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 464, &c.

‡ Letter from Swift to Pope, 12th June 1731. Ibid. Vol. XVII. p. 376.

§ "THE INTELLIGENCER. No. II.

"*Occurrare* CAPRO, *cornu ferit ille, caveto.*

"My design, in writing this paper, being chiefly to expose such barbarians, who think themselves exempt from those laws of hospitality, which have, through all ages and countries, been observed by the best and most distinguished part of mankind, I hope I shall, even in my own country, find persons enough to join with me in a hearty detestation of a certain country-squire, at the relation of the following fact, which I shall tell without the least aggravation or partiality.

"Two clergymen, of some distinction, travelling to the country for their health, happened to set up together in a small village,*

* Gorey, or New Borough.

Digitized by Google

probably his companion, is said to have made this impromptu :—

Hear not, Britain, how Ireland's pride and glory,
Was butted in a slough by the Ram of Gorey.

which was under the dominion of a certain animal, dignified with a brace of titles, that of a militia-colonel and a squire. One of these gentlemen, standing in the street, and observing a coachman driving his coach and four horses furiously against him, turned into the close passage between his inn and the sign-post; but the coachman, instead of driving through the middle of the street, which was the usual and most commodious way, turned short, and drove full upon the gentleman, without any notice, so that he was on a sudden enclosed between the fore-horses; and if his friend and another gentleman, who were in the middle of the street, had not suddenly cried out to stop the coach, he must have unavoidably been trodden under the horses' feet, and his body bruised to death by the wheels running over him. His friend, who saw with terror what had like to have befallen him, full of indignation, repaired immediately to the aforesaid squire or colonel, (to whom he was told the equipage belonged,) with a complaint against his coachman. But the squire, instead of expressing any concern, or offering any redress, sent the Doctor away with the following answer: Sir, I have a great regard for your cloth, and have sent my coachman to ask your friend's pardon, for one of your servants this moment told me what had happened.—But, sir, said the Doctor, do you think that is sufficient? I dare venture to affirm, if the like had befallen you within the liberties* of my friend, and you were brought to the same danger by his servant, he would not only have him punished, but, at the same time, he would discharge him his service.—Sir, (said the Colonel,) I tell you again, that I have sent my coachman to ask his pardon, and I think that is enough,—which he spoke with some sturdiness; and well he might, for he had too cannons at his back.—Good God! said the Doctor to himself, (when he had got out of gunshot,) what a Hottentot have I been talking to! who so little values the life of a gentleman, and, as it happened, that very gentleman to whom the nation hath in a particular manner been obliged. Back he went, full of resentment for the slighting treatment his friend met with, and very candidly reported all that passed; who being a man of a different spirit from that wretched colonel, ordered one of his servants to write the following letter.

Sir,—My master commanded me to tell you, that if you do not punish and turn off that villain, your coachman, he will think there was a design upon his life. I put this in writing for fear of mistakes. , I am your humble servant to command,

A. R.

* The Liberties of St. Sepulchre's.

Digitized by Google

Amid these disputes, Carteret, with the skill of a thorough-bred courtier, trimmed between the danger of

"The superscription was, 'For Squire Wether, or some such name.'

"This letter was delivered, and away went the travellers. They had not rode far, before they fell into the company of a gentleman, a degree above the common level, and who seemed to be a man of candour and integrity, which encouraged them to recount what had happened. He said in answer, that they had a narrow escape; and it was a wonder that the whole town did not fall upon them at once, and worry them: for the people there had little or no devotion besides what was engaged to the squire, as an effect of the terrors they lay under from their landlord, who rode them all down as poor as his fox-hunters. After this he took occasion, with great modesty and decency, to draw his character, which was to the following purpose: That the squire had about fifteen hundred pounds a-year, and lived in a long white barn, where no man living was one farthing the better for him. That his piety consisted in six psalms every day after dinner, without one drop of wine. That he had once reduced a certain reverend dean, plumper than any two of his brethren, to be as slender about the waist as a weasel, by a fortnight's scouring of bad ale, to which the dean was not accustomed. That his hospitality was within the enclosure of a rampart, with a drawbridge. That if any gentleman was admitted by chance, his entertainment was lean salt beef, sour beer, and muddy ale. That his charity was as much upon the catch as a pickpocket; for his method was to bring others to erect charity-schools, by promising his assistance, and so leaving them in the lurch.

"That, without the least tincture of learning, he was a great pretender to oratory and poetry, and eminently bad at both; which (I hope I shall be excused the digression) brings to my memory a character given by Julius Capitolinus of the Emperor Verus. 'Melior quidem orator fuisse dicitur quam poeta; imo (ut verius dicam) pejor poeta quam rhetor:' viz. He was a better orator than poet; but, to speak the thing more properly, he was a viler poet than an orator. But to give you a specimen of his genius, I shall repeat an epigram of his own composition, (and I am very sure it is every line his own, without any help,) which is drawn by a sign-dauber on the cross-board of a ferry-boat, in characters that have hitherto stood the fury of all weathers.

All you that are
To Andrew Heir,
And you that him attend,
Shall ferry'd be
O'er Carrick free,
For Blank's the Boatman's Friend.

"The behaviour of this squire being of the most savage kind, I think myself obliged, out of the tender regard which I bear to all strangers

Digitized by Google

offending the English ministry, or rather of furnishing them with an apology for displacing him, and that of

and travellers, to animadvert upon him in as gentle a manner as the occasion will allow, and, therefore, I shall first lay down a few postulatums. That every travelling gentleman is presumed to be under the protection of the governing mayor, sovereign, portriff, or squire of the town or village, which he happens to make his stage; that the laws of humanity, hospitality, and civility, oblige him, if there be no accommodation in the public-houses fit for a person of distinction, to invite him to his own, or supply the deficiencies as well as he can; that if any insult or injury be offered, either to such stranger or his servants, the squire is obliged to justify, vindicate, and espouse their cause. This was the method observed among the civilized people of the old Jewish and Heathen world, where we find some of the Patriarchs themselves condescending to wash the feet of such travellers as they entertained. And so sacred was the regard for strangers among the Heathens, that they dignified their supreme god with the title of Jupiter Hospitalis. Nothing was thought so monstrous as to offer any violence to sojourners among them; which was so religiously observed, that it became the glory of the most distinguished heroes to destroy and extirpate such as were remarkable for their cruelty to strangers. This it was which added so much glory to the character of Theseus, for the punishments he inflicted on Sisiphus, Procrustes, &c. It was owing likewise to a generous indignation, that Hercules threw Diomede (the colonel and squire of that age) to be devoured by those horses, which he fed with the flesh of poor travellers; and I find, upon enquiry, that they were coach-horses too. I shall make no further remark upon this, nor application, but say to the squire that it is very happy for him the present age has not one Hercules left, or a week would not pass before he should feel the weight of that hero's club, or be thrown, by way of reprisal, under his own horses' feet. And I may further add, that, in this whole kingdom, from one end of it to the other, another squire could not be found who would behave himself in the same manner to the same person: but hundreds, who, on the contrary, would have given all the satisfaction that gentlemen of justice, humanity, and common benevolence, ought to do, upon the like accident, although they had never seen him before. I confess this paper contains nothing besides a dry fact, and a few occasional observations upon it. But, in the former, I told my readers that facts would be the chief part of the entertainment I meant to give them. If what I have said may have any effect on the person concerned, (to whom care shall be taken to send this account,) or if it helps to revive the old spirit of hospitality among us,—or, at least, begets a detestation of the like inhuman usage in others, one part of my design is answered. However, it cannot be unseasonable to expose malice, avarice, brutality, and hypocrisy, wherever we find it."

I find this story of Squire Ram alluded to by Mr. Geogeghan, a correspondent of the Dean, who makes it his boast, that he had filled the offending coachman drunk, and thereby occasioned him to lose both his place and character.—Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. p. 236.

Digitized by Google

breaking communication with Swift, whose influence as well as his talents were not a little to be dreaded, even if it had not been Carteret's object to preserve and strengthen his interest among the adversaries of Walpole, so far as it could be done with security and decency. He was distinguished by a readiness of wit, with which he could retort and parry even the attacks of Swift. Of this we have already seen a very classical instance. And it is said, that, about the time when the proclamation was abroad against the Drapier's fourth letter, the Dean visited the castle, and having waited for some time without seeing the lord-lieutenant, wrote upon one of the windows of the chamber of audience these lines :—

> My very good lord, 'tis a very hard task,
> For a man to wait here, who has nothing to ask.

Under which Carteret wrote the following happy reply :—

> My very good Dean, there are few who come here,
> But have something to ask, or something to fear.

On some such occasion, when Carteret had parried, with his usual dexterity, some complaint or request of Swift, he exclaimed, "What, in God's name, do you do here? Get back to your own country, and send us our boobies again!"

They appear uniformly to have understood each other. Carteret took no offence at the patriotic effusions of the Dean, however vehement, and Swift, without expecting that thorough change of measures respecting Ireland, which he knew it was not in Carteret's power to effect, was contented to exert his influence as occasion offered, to prevail on the lord-lieutenant to promote either his own personal friends, or persons whom he had political reasons for recommending. The Dean had, indeed, no longer those high ideas of Carteret's patriotism, which seem to have dictated the poem entitled "The Birth of Manly Virtue;" but, down to the period of his leaving Ireland, he continued to retain as much respect for him, as was consistent with his consenting to remain the in-

Digitized by Google

voluntary instrument of a ministry whom he hated, and their nominal agent in measures which he secretly disapproved.* And he acknowledged at the same time, with gratitude, the lord-lieutenant's attention to his recommendations. Carteret's complaisance on such occasions excited the loud complaints of Richard Tighe, and other violent Whigs, who, knowing by what a precarious tenure the lord-lieutenant held his situation, endeavoured to alarm him by an outcry that his favours were chiefly conferred upon those who were disaffected to government; on which occasion Swift, with his usual ironical gravity, wrote his Vindication of Lord Carteret from the charge of favouring none but Tories, High-churchmen and Jacobites,† in which he ascribes the promotion of Sheridan, (so speedily checked,) and that of Delany, to the lieutenant's old-fashioned taste for classical literature, which, in these cases, had unfortunately prevailed over the more laudable quality of party zeal. In this treatise the demerits of Lord Allen and Tighe are exposed, as having been most active in exciting those clamours among the high-flown adherents of the ministry, or, as Swift entitles them, the hopers, pretenders, expecters, and professors, whose claim it was to engross all the favours of government. Besides his friendship for the lord-lieutenant himself, the Dean was upon the best terms with his lady, his mother-in-law Lady Worsley, and his whole family, as appears from his "Apology," addressed to Lady Carteret.‡

In the course of these three years, the Dean had some other literary encounters. One of his antagonists, Jonathan Smedley, Dean of Clogher, a man of indifferent character, a trader in the petty scandal of literature, a

* "I believe my Lord Carteret, since he is no longer lieutenant, may not wish me ill, and I have told him often that I only hated him as lieutenant. I confess he had a genteeler manner of binding the chains of this kingdom than most of his predecessors, and I confess at the same time, that he had, six times, a regard to my recommendation, by preferring so many of my friends in the church; the two last acts of his favour were to add to the dignities of Dr. Delany and Mr. Stopford."

† Swift's Works, Vol. VII. p. 283.

‡ Swift's Works, Vol. XIV. p. 405.

Digitized by Google

violent Whig withal, had published a tolerably complete collection of all the ribaldry which he could compose or rake together against Pope and Swift, under the title of GULLIVERIANA, or a fourth volume to their Miscellany. This presumption not only procured him a prominent place in the Dunciad, but, upon his coming to Ireland under the protection of the Duke of Grafton, and becoming Dean of Clogher, gained him the further distinction of repeated notice in the Dean's satires. It was not unprovoked, for Smedley's "much malice" was "mingled with a little wit," and, like the abuse of all who care not what they say, his lampoons sometimes hit the mark.* But what seems to have provoked the Dean

* We printed a tolerable poem of Smedley's on Swift's instalment; and the following, though a malignant caricature, has considerable point and vivacity, as well as a distorted resemblance to the Dean's character:—

THE DEVIL'S LAST GAME,

A SATIRE.

SAID Old Nick to St. Michael, you use me but ill,
To suppress all my force, and restrain all my skill;
Let me loose at religion, I'll show my good parts,
And try if your doctrine can balance my arts.
'Tis a match, cried the angel, and drew off his guard,
And the devil slipt from him, to play a court card.
The first help he sought was a qualified mind,
That had compass and void for the use he design'd.
There occurr'd a pert nothing, a stick of church timber,
Who had stiffness of will, but his morals were limber:
To whom wit served for reason, and passion for zeal;
Who had teeth like a viper, and tail like an eel:
Wore the malice of hell with heavenly grace,
Of humour enchanting, and easy of face;
His tongue flow'd with honey, his eyes flash'd delight:
He despised what was wrong, and abused what was right;
Had a nack to laugh luckily; never thought twice:
And with coarseness of heart had a taste that was nice.
Nature form'd him malignant, but whetting him fast,
He was edged for decay, and too brittle to last.
He would quarrel with virtue because 'twas his foe's,
And was hardly a friend to the vice which he chose:
He could love nothing grave, nothing pleasant forbear;
He was always in jest, but was most so in prayer!
Lord be praised, quoth the devil, a fig for all grace!
So he breathed a new brogue o'er the bronze of his face;
Lent him pride above hope, and conceit above spleen,
Slipt him into church service, and call'd him a Dean.

Digitized by Google

more than personal libels, to which he was in general insensible, was, that Smedley affected to court Carteret's favour, in the "looser rhyme," with which "t'other Jonathan," as he familiarly termed Swift, used to propitiate Ormond and Oxford. A part of the Dean's displeasure even fell upon Delany, who, being a good deal about the person of the lord-lieutenant, and by no means so indifferent to his own interest as the thoughtless Sheridan, endeavoured, by poetical epistles, fables, &c. occasionally to awake his patron's benevolence. Swift, who despised what he called the trade of a "sweetener," unmoved by the occasional strokes of flattery to himself, interspersed through those pieces, rebuked Delany with considerable asperity for his assentation. The Doctor had given further offence, by attacking the Intelligencer, to which he was not aware that Swift was a contributor. This produced "Paddy's character of the Intelligencer," in which the assaults of Delany on Sheridan are compared to those of the wasp who pursued the eagle even to the bosom of Jupiter, and even there,

The spiteful insect stung the god.

But, from the address to Delany on the libels written against him, it is evident, that, notwithstanding these satirical effusions, he retained a considerable place in the Dean's favour. Indeed, it was the influence of Delany, which indirectly, or perhaps directly, occasioned the final offence taken by Queen Caroline against Swift. To understand this, there must be produced on the stage three characters of a very subordinate and dubious description.

The Reverend Thomas Pilkington was introduced by Delany to Dean Swift's notice, and obtained a humble post in his cathedral. Having some vivacity of talents, though totally devoid of principle, he made himself agreeable by petty attentions and services; and, upon his expressing a wish to go to England, the Dean, who was ever anxious to reward kindness and to serve merit, or what seemed to be such, gave him warm recommendations to his old friend Barber, then Lord Mayor of London, who made Pilkington his chaplain.

Digitized by Google

He also introduced him to Pope, Bolingbroke, and one or two other friends. But they were soon disgusted by his impudence and undisguised profligacy, which produced from Bolingbroke, and even from Barber, an expostulation to Swift on the too great readiness with which he granted such recommendations.* Pilkington's wife was a person of much the same description with himself, having some cleverness, much petulance, and a plentiful lack both of virtue and discretion. From her husband's being for some time about the Dean's person, this gossiping dame picked up some knowledge of his peculiar habits, and some little anecdotes concerning him, which she afterwards represented as having all taken place in her own presence, with the addition of abundance of figments which had no foundation whatever.†

About the same time, and also by the recommendation of Dr. Delany, the Dean interested himself considerably in advancing a subscription for the poems of Mrs. Barber, the wife of a woollen-draper in Dublin. She was desirous of dedicating her book to Lord Orrery, and she prevailed upon the Dean to ask permission of his lordship to such effect, and Swift's letter to that purpose is printed as preliminary to her dedication. When this person went to England in 1731, to get her work printed, Swift appears to have recommended her to Dr. Arbuthnot, Gay, Lady Betty Germaine, Mrs. Cæsar, Mr. Barber the printer, and others, whom he thought likely to advance her interest. But an extra-

* See Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 207.

† Her pretended intimacy at the deanery was in the highest degree exaggerated, for she was never even seen there by Mrs. Whiteway. Yet, in some way or other, she had acquired considerable knowledge of the Dean's habits. For example, one of her anecdotes is, that she saw Swift cut the leaves out of a handsomely bound book of poems, and put them into the chimney grate, saying, he would give them what they wanted greatly—*fire*—and that she was employed by him to paste into the cover the letters of his friends. Now, among Dr. Lyons' papers, there are actually the folio boards of a book which has suffered this operation, and in the inside, a list, in Swift's hand, of the letters which had been pasted in to supply the original contents.

Digitized by Google

ordinary circumstance occurred: for about this time Queen Caroline received three letters, with the Dean's signature, but written in a feigned hand, recommending to her in very haughty and unbecoming terms, an enquiry into the distresses of Ireland, and descending at once, from a warm and even violent exposition of national grievances, to the case of Mrs. Barber, who is extolled, in the most extravagant manner, as eminent for genius and merit, an honour to her country and to her sex; the best female poet of this or any other age, honoured or envied by every man of genius in England. Queen Caroline was extremely incensed at the tenour of these letters, as well she might, nor did she drop her resentment, although Mrs. Howard expressed her conviction that they were a forgery. Swift, on his part, wrote to Pope and to Mrs. Howard, disavowing the letters alluded to,* disclaiming those extravagant eulogies which were heaped on Mrs. Barber with so little modesty, and explaining, that he had only taken an interest in her subscription, meaning to assist humble and

* Dr. Johnson says, "he urged the improbability of the accusation, but never denied it; he shuffles between cowardice and veracity, and talks big when he says nothing." It is unpleasant to observe one man of genius pass such harsh and undeserved censures on another. In his letter to Pope, Swift allows he might be guilty of folly—"But in such a degree as to write to the queen, who has used me ill without any cause, and to write in such a manner as the letter you sent me, and in such a style, and to have so much zeal for one almost a stranger, and to make such a description of a woman as to prefer her before all mankind; and to instance it as one of the greatest grievances of Ireland, that her Majesty has not encouraged Mrs. Barber, a woollen-draper's wife declined in the world, because she has a knack at versifying,—was to suppose, or fear, a folly so transcendent, that no man could be guilty of, who was not fit for Bedlam. You know the letter you sent enclosed is not my hand; and why I should disguise my hand, and yet sign my name, should seem unaccountable." Swift's Works, Vol. XVII. p. 389, 390. Can this be fairly termed shuffling? Surely the pointing out the utter absurdity of an accusation is the strongest possible mode not only of denying, but disproving it. The reader may also compare the terms of the forged letter with the limited and qualified commendation by which the Dean recommends Mrs. Barber to the protection of Lord Orrery. These cannot be better expressed than in the prefatory letter with which he honoured her very indifferent volume of poems, and which the reader will find in Volume X. p. 400.

Digitized by Google

indigent merit. Nothing more indeed could be inferred from the terms of his letter to Lord Orrery, printed in Mrs. Barber's book, as preliminary to her dedication to that nobleman. Nor was it to be thought that he would have expressed himself in terms of such exaggeration to Queen Caroline, while he was writing his real opinion to the public in a tone of decent moderation. But in this exculpation, he resumed all his former causes of displeasure against the queen and Mrs. Howard, (now Countess of Suffolk,) particularly his being advised by the latter to remain in London after the death of George I. when he designed to have visited the continent; nor did he forget the unrequited present of Irish silk, nor her majesty's omitting to send the promised medals. Lady Suffolk returned a good-humoured answer, and Lady Betty Germaine afterwards undertook, with great spirit, the defence of her friend. But the idea of her insincerity was too deeply impressed upon the Dean's mind; all future correspondence was dropped between them; and the breach became irreconcilable between Swift and the court.

The reader may be disposed to ask, who could have taken it upon them to forge letters addressed to the queen by such a person? The only letter preserved is in a large female hand, bearing no resemblance whatever to that of the Dean, any more than the outrageous compliments to Mrs. Barber correspond with his taste or style, who, even in praising his dearest friends, usually conveyed his eulogy under a mask of irony, and whose taste was too just to bestow such extravagant commendations on verses which scarce reach mediocrity. It is therefore probable they were forged by Mrs. Barber, or some of her friends; which is the more likely, as scandal imputed to her an intrigue with an Irish literary character of some distinction. The Pilkingtons, husband and wife, were also acquainted with the poetess, and either of them were capable, from talents and disposition, to have committed such an imposture, and knew enough of the Dean's style to execute such a clumsy imitation as that letter exhibits. There is some reason to think Mrs. Barber became alarmed at the

Digitized by Google

probable consequence of these letters, and dreaded the queen's resentment. Indeed, the vexation that Swift was to experience from these unworthy Pilkingtons did not terminate here, and it may be as well to conclude the subject at once.

Swift readily abandoned the profits of his publications to those whom he meant to favour, and, in his regard for Mrs. Barber, he permitted her to sell, for her own benefit, the "Verses to a Lady, who desired to be addressed in the heroic style." She conveyed them to the press through the medium of the notorious Pilkington. Some passages awakened the wrath of Walpole, who, though generally indifferent to satire, seems to have feared that of the Dean, and caught at the opportunity of making his publishers an example. Pilkington betrayed both Barber the printer and Motte the bookseller; and they were subjected to repeated examinations before the privy-council. But as neither judged it necessary to be punctual in recollecting any circumstances which could be prejudicial to themselves, they were discharged without any punishment.* Indeed, according to our modern ideas of libels, we search the poem in vain for any passage upon which such a charge could be grounded. But it is possible that it does not now appear in its original state, nor has the editor ever seen the first edition. Swift's eyes were now opened to the infamy of the Pilkingtons, which he expressed strongly in a letter to his old friend, Alderman Barber.† For Mrs. Barber, however, he retained his regard, and at her request, so late as 1736, bestowed upon her the manuscript of his "Essay on Polite Conversation," a set of dialogues which he had compiled thirty years before,‡ for the purpose of exposing the quaint and triti-

* See Motte's account of the matter in a letter to the Dean, 31st July 1735, Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 353.

† "I confess that Dr. Delany, the most eminent preacher we have, is a very unlucky recommender, for he forced me to countenance Pilkington; introduced him to me, and praised the wit, virtue, and humour of him and his wife, whereas he proved the falsest rogue, and she the most profligate whore, in either kingdom." Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 125.

‡ It seems to be the same with the Essay on Conversation, which he designed for publication in 1710.

Digitized by Google

cal smartnesses which good spirits and gaiety of temper pass off in certain circles for wit and brilliancy. At the same time it must be owned, that, in the editor's apprehension at least, the Dean's native humour has predominated over his desire to ridicule the conversation of the times, for those who frequent society must often have partaken in dialogues much more tiresome than those of Miss Notable and Tom Neverout. The predominance of proverbs in these dialogues must certainly have been rather owing to the Dean's peculiar humour, than to any custom or fashion of the time.

The occasional poems which the Dean published about this time, were numerous and of various kinds. Some were satirical, and such were almost universally given to the public anonymously by means of the hawkers. Under this description fall the various political poems already mentioned; and such as we have still to allude to, the attacks upon Lord Allen and Tighe, published in the Intelligencer, or in single sheets or broadsides, as they are generally termed, which were consigned to the hawkers. These may be classed with his political satires in prose, since the Dean seldom was offended to the extent of making a public assault upon his adversary, without attacking him at once with both weapons, of prose and verse.

There was another class of fugitive pieces in which the Dean neglected both the decency due to his station as a clergyman and a gentleman, and his credit as a man of literature. These were poems of a coarse and indelicate character, where his imagination dwelt upon filthy and disgusting subjects, and his ready talents were employed to embody its impurities in humorous and familiar verse. The best apology for this unfortunate perversion of taste, indulgence of caprice, and abuse of talent, is the habits of the times, and situation of the author. In the former respect, we should do great injustice to the present day, by comparing our manners with those of the reign of George I. The writings even of the most esteemed poets of that period, contain passages which, in modern times, would be accounted to deserve the pillory. Nor was the tone

Digitized by Google

of conversation more pure than that of composition; for the taint of Charles II.'s reign continued to infect society until the present reign, when, if not more moral, we have become at least more decent than our fathers:* and although Swift's offences of this description certainly far exceeded those of contemporary authors, the peculiarities of his habits and state of mind are also to be received in extenuation of his grossness. This unfortunate propensity seems nearly allied to the misanthropy which was a precursor of his mental derangement; and notwithstanding the talent employed upon those coarse subjects, "The Lady's Dressing-Room,"—"Cassinus and Peter,"—"Chloe," and other poems of that class, are to be ranked with the description of the Yahoos, as the marks of an incipient disorder of the mind, which induced the author to dwell upon degrading and disgusting subjects, from which all men, in possession of healthful taste and sound faculties, turn with abhorrence. If it be true, as alleged by Delany, that this propensity only distinguished the latter years of Swift's life,† it may be more readily accounted for from this cause,

* The Editor was told by his late regretted friend, Mr. John Kemble, that there existed a distinct oral tradition of a conversation having passed between a lady of high rank seated in a box in the theatre, and Mr. Congreve, the celebrated dramatist, who was placed at some distance; which is so little fit for these pages, that a rake of common outward decency would hardly employ such language in a brothel. Indeed, it is only necessary to refer to the ordinary novels by which our ancestors were amused, to estimate the improvement of public delicacy. The Editor was acquainted with an old lady of family, who assured him that, in her younger days, Mrs. Behn's novels were as currently upon the toilette as the works of Miss Edgeworth at present; and described with some humour her own surprise, when, the book falling into her hands after a long interval of years, and when its contents were quite forgotten, she found it altogether impossible to endure, at the age of fourscore, what at fifteen she, like all the fashionable world of the time, had perused without an idea of impropriety.

† So says Delany, and adds, that he had heard the Dean rebuke Stella with great asperity for using a coarse allusion in society. His delicacy, however, must have been only occasional and capricious, for the Journal furnishes many instances how little it influenced his own correspondence with females. As to Delany's charge against Pope, I suspect it arose from personal pique.

Digitized by Google

than by supposing that Swift acquired from Pope a habit of thinking and writing, in which he far exceeded Pope himself. Indeed, as he used to call upon Pope to admire Rabelais more than the Bard of Twickenham was disposed to do, it may be urged with probability, that Swift rather led the way than received lessons in the coarseness so rankly practised by the witty Frenchman.* It may be lastly remembered, that neither in this nor other cases, (unless when he had some particular point in view,) did the Dean write with a view to publication. He produced and read his poems to the little circle of friends, where he presided as absolute dictator, where all applauded the manner, and none, it may be presumed, ventured to criticise the subject. Copies were requested, and frequently granted. If refused, the auditors contrived to write down from memory an imperfect version. These, in the usual course of things, were again copied repeatedly, until at length they fell into the hands of some hackney author or bookseller, who, for profit, or to affront the author, or with both views, gave them to the public. It would seem that, even to Pope himself, Swift refused an explicit acknowledgment of his having written them.†

The verses of society, to borrow a phrase from the French, those light passages of humour which were written merely for the circle in which Swift lived at the time, have been already noticed. Besides the constant war of jest and gibe and whimsical eccentricity which was kept up between the Dean and Sheridan, he had now formed an intimacy with Sir Arthur Acheson and his lady, which gave occasion to some of his most distinguished productions of this kind. At their seat of

* Spence's Anecdotes by Singers, p. 141.

† It is supposed the following postscript of a letter from Pope, 6th January 1733-4, refers to some curiosity which Mrs. Martha Blount had expressed on the subject of some of these indelicate poems: "I am just now told, a very curious lady intends to write to you, to pump you about some poems said to be yours. Pray tell her, that you have not answered me on the same questions, and that I shall take it as a thing never to be forgiven from you, if you tell another what you have concealed from me." Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 191.

Digitized by Google

Gosford, in the north of Ireland, he spent in 1728-9 almost a whole year, assisting Sir Arthur in his agricultural improvements, and lecturing, as usual, the lady of the manor, upon the improvement of her health by walking, and her mind by reading; and he appears to have found a docile pupil as well as an obliging hostess. Sir Arthur himself thought with the Dean on political subjects, was a good scholar and fond of the classics, which predilections formed his bond of union with Swift. The circumstance of his letting a ruinous building, called Hamilton's Bawn, to the Crown for a barrack, not only occasioned his being distinguished in the Apology for Lord Carteret,* but gave rise to one of the Dean's most lively pieces of fugitive humour.† The company also whom he met at Market-Hill was agreeable to him. Among these were distinguished Robert and Henry Leslie, sons of the celebrated nonjuror, Dr. Leslie.

The younger brother, Henry Leslie, was an excellent scholar, and a perfect fine gentleman. He had attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the Spanish service, but lost his commission upon a regulation being adopted against the employment of Protestants. He resided for several years in the town of Market-hill, near Sir Arthur Acheson's house, and Swift appears to have been his guest for about six months, in 1730, the year following his long residence in Sir Arthur Acheson's family. At Market-Hill he also met Captain Creichton, an aged and reduced officer of dragoons, whose campaigns had been chiefly directed against the Scotch west-country Whigs during the reigns of Charles II. and James II. To relieve this old gentleman's necessities, Swift compiled his tales of youthful adventure into a distinct narrative, which was published for the captain's benefit, with considerable success.

* See Swift's Works, Vol. VII. p. 303.

† "The Grand Question Debated, Whether Hamilton's Bawn should be turned into a Barrack or Malt-House?" Swift sent a part of this poem, under the title of the Barrack, to the Intelligencer. Afterwards many copies were transcribed from one which had been obtained by Lord Carteret, and at length it found its way to the public. See Swift's Works, Vol. XV. p. 171, and Vol. XVIII. p. 6.

Digitized by Google

His residence at Market-Hill was so agreeable to Swift, that at one time he seems to have thought of rendering it more permanent, by taking a lease from Sir Arthur, with the purpose of building a villa. The name of the chosen spot was changed from Drumlack to Drapier's Hill, in order the better to deserve the intended honour; and Sir Arthur, or some friend in his name, published a poem in the Dublin Journal, addressed to the Dean, and exulting in the future fame of a place on which he had resolved to fix his residence.* If we are to interpret literally the poetical apology which Swift made for laying aside this project, he had not found Sir Arthur uniformly guided by his opinion in the management of his estate, and had discovered that the knight's taste in literature, being turned toward metaphysics, was more different from his own than he had expected. But a growing reluctance to expend money and the distance of the situation from Dublin, a distance rendered incommodious by the Dean's increasing infirmities, were probably the real reasons for his declining a project, adopted perhaps hastily, and without much reflection.

Indeed his presence as a visitor, in the state of his health and spirits, was not altogether without inconvenience. Family tradition says, that Swift was already subject to those capricious and moody fits of melancholy and ill-humour, which preceded the decay of his understanding. He sometimes retired from table and had his victuals carried into his own apartment, from which he would not stir till his good-humour returned. And in one of those fits of caprice he took the liberty, during Sir Arthur Acheson's absence, to cut down an old and picturesque thorn near the house, which his landlord particularly valued. On this occasion, Sir Arthur was seriously displeased, and the Dean was under the necessity of propitiating him by those verses, which have rendered the old thorn at Market-Hill immortal.†

* These, with the other verses composed at Market-Hill, are printed together in Swift's Works, Volume XV. p. 165.

† Mr. Sheridan has preserved two anecdotes of Swift about this

Digitized by Google

Such stories, imperfectly reported by scandal, and listened to with malignant greediness by envy, occasioned a charge against Swift, similar to that which was preferred after his residence at Gaulstown House. Against this malicious allegation of ingratitude and inhospitality, which was urged in some verses handed about Dublin, and afterwards printed, Swift defended himself at length in a letter to Dr. Jinny, Rector of Armagh. He mentions the "Grand Question Debated" as the ground of the charge, and describes this sort of composition as merely sallies of fancy and humour, intended for private diversion; appeals to Jinny's knowledge of the whole

period. Captain Hamilton of Castle-Hamilton, a plain country gentleman, but of excellent natural sense, came upon a visit at Market-Hill, while the Dean was staying there. "Sir Arthur, upon hearing of his friend's arrival, ran out to receive him at the door, followed by Swift. The captain, who did not see the Dean, as it was in the dusk of the evening, in his blunt way, upon entering the house, exclaimed, 'that he was very sorry he was so unfortunate to choose that time for his visit.'—Why so?—'Because I hear Dean Swift is with you. He is a great scholar, a wit; a plain country 'squire will have but a bad time of it in his company, and I don't like to be laughed at.' Swift then stepped to the captain, from behind Sir Arthur, where he had stood, and said to him, 'Pray, Captain Hamilton, do you know how to say *yes*, or *no*, properly?'—'Yes, I think I have understanding enough for that.'—'Then give me your hand,—depend upon it, you and I will agree very well.' The captain told me he never passed two months so pleasantly in his life, nor had ever met with so agreeable a companion as Swift proved to be during the whole time."

The other anecdote records a ready reply by a gentleman who passed by the name of Killbuck Tuite to Swift, who upbraided him with not knowing the way to Market-Hill. "'That is the way,' said Swift, 'with all you Irish blockheads; you never know the way to any place beyond the next dunghill."—'Why,' answered Tuite, 'I never was at Market-Hill: Have not you been there, Mr. Dean?' He acknowledged he had.—'Then what a damned English blockhead are you,' replied Killbuck, 'to find fault with me for not directing you the way to a place where I never had been, when you don't know it yourself, who have been there!' Swift, with a countenance of great counterfeited terror, immediately rose and changed seats with Doughty, (a man of great size and strength,) who happened to be next to him, placing the giant between him and Tuite to protect him against that wild man, and skulking behind him like a child, with well acted fear, to the no small entertainment of the company; who, however, were not sorry that the Dean had met with his match."

Digitized by Google

history of the verses on the Barrack, and the favourable reception it met with from Sir Arthur Acheson and his lady. The charge of ingratitude brought against him, he repels with suitable disdain. "I was originally," he observes, "as unwilling to be libelled as the nicest man can be: but having been used to such treatment ever since I unhappily began to be known, I am now grown hardened; and while the friends I have left will continue to use me with any kindness, I shall need but a small degree of philosophy to bear me up against those who are pleased to be my enemies on the score of party zeal, and the hopes of turning that zeal to account. One thing, I confess, would still touch me to the quick; I mean if any person of true genius would employ his pen against me; but if I am not very partial to myself, I cannot remember, that among at least two thousand papers full of groundless reflections against me, hundreds of which I have seen, and heard of more, I ever saw any one production that the meanest writer could have cause to be proud of: for which I can assign a very natural reason; that, during the whole busy time of my life, the men of wit (in England) were all my particular friends, although many of them differed from me in opinions of public persons and proceedings."*

In this society, and with these amusements, but with health gradually undermined, Swift endured, and occasionally enjoyed existence, from the death of Stella, in 1727, till about 1732.

* Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 6.

Digitized by Google

SECTION VII.

Swift's conduct as a dignified Clergyman—His controversies with the Dissenters—And with the Bishops of Ireland—Verses on his own Death—Faulkner's edition of his Works—His quarrel with Bettesworth—Satire on Quadrille—Legion Club—Controversy concerning the lowering of the Gold Coin—History of Queen Anne's reign—Swift's private Life at this period—He disposes of his Fortune to found a Hospital—He sinks into incapacity—His Death.

ERE proceeding to the melancholy remainder of Swift's life, we may here resume an account of his conduct as a dignitary of the Church of England, and of the various occasions in which he stood forth in her behalf, when he conceived her rights assaulted and endangered.

It ought to be first noticed, that Swift possessed, in the fullest degree, the only secure foundation for excellence in the clerical profession—a sincere and devout faith in the doctrines of Christianity. This was doubted during his life, on account of the levities in the Tale of a Tub; and also because he carried his detestation of hypocrisy to such a blameable excess, that he was rather willing to appear indifferent about religion, than to be suspected of affecting over zeal in her cause. Thus, when in London, he rose early in the morning, that he might attend public worship without observation; and in Dublin, Delany was six months in his house before he discovered that the Dean read prayers to his family with punctual regularity. He was equally regular in his private devotions. The place which he occupied as an oratory was a small closet, in which, when his situation required to be in some degree watched, he was daily observed to pray with great devotion. When his faculties, and particularly his memory, began to fail, he used often to enquire

Digitized by Google

anxiously whether he had been in this apartment in the course of the day, and if answered in the affirmative, seemed to be delivered from the apprehension that he had neglected the duties of devotion.

Thus impressed with the practical belief of the truths which it was his profession to teach, he was punctual in the discharge of those public duties incumbent on his dignified station in the church. He read the service in his cathedral regularly, though with more force than grace of elocution, and administered the sacrament weekly, in the most solemn and devout manner, with his own hands. He preached also in his turn; and the sermons which have been preserved belie his own severe censure, "that he could only preach pamphlets." On the contrary, Swift's discourses contain strong, sensible, and precise language, which distinguishes all his prose writings. They are not, indeed, without a cast of his peculiar humour, but it is not driven beyond the verge of propriety. As he considered the power of pulpit elocution as of the last consequence to the church, he used to attend particularly to the discourse of every young clergyman who preached in his cathedral, and never failed to minute down such words as seemed too obscure for the understandings of a popular congregation. In his Letter to a Clergyman, he has dwelt upon this common error of young preachers, which, with other excellent remarks contained in that treatise, shows that Swift not only valued the dignity of his order, but knew that it can only be maintained by the regular discharge of clerical duties in a decorous and practical manner.

But his zeal for the interests of his younger brethren was not only shown by public and private precepts, and by the tracts he wrote upon the Fates of Clergymen, and the Hatred against the Clergy;—he endeavoured to serve them more effectually by patronage and recommendation. It was to this purpose chiefly he turned his intimacy with Carteret, and his long friendship with Lady Betty Germaine, who resided in family with his successor, the Duke of Dorset, and possessed influence with him. The frequency and urgency of

Digitized by Google

his applications, as well as, generally speaking, the worth of those in whose favour they were made, give the best and most solid proof of his real interest in the promotion of clergymen of virtue and learning.

Within his own deanery, Swift was scrupulously accurate in maintaining and improving the revenues of the living, and rejected every proposal which was made to raise wealth for himself, at the expense of the establishment. When he was almost sunk into imbecility, and love of money, a habit rather than a passion, seemed to be his sole remaining motive of action, he rejected, with indignation, a considerable sum, offered for the renewal of a lease, upon terms which would have been unfavourable for his successors. To the last moment of his capacity, he kept an accurate account of the revenues of the cathedral, and even of the sums collected and expended in charity, of which his accounts are now before the Editor. One is dated so low as 1742.*

Upon the same principle, the Dean took care, by consulting proper judges, that the choir of his cathedral should be well regulated, and his correspondence with Dr. Arbuthnot often turns upon procuring proper choristers. His zeal in this particular also survived the decay of his abilities, for he drew up a singular document, prohibiting the members of his choir from attending ordinary music meetings, so late as 28th January 1741.† The Dean himself did not affect either to be a judge or

* The entries in these records sometimes exhibit the Dean's peculiar humour, as for example,—

"Increased to Mr. Lyon by the pernicious vice and advice of my daily spunge and [a word illegible] Will's son, to 12 scoundrels at 6½d. per week, fortnight, L.0 6 6

1739-40, January 12. A long extraordinary cold season, and I was worried by Mr. Lyon to give more than the fund will support. However I give———— 20 shill.

March 11. To a blind parson and his wife, 0 2 8½

The Will's son above mentioned, was Francis Wilson, Prebendary of Kilmactolway, living then an inmate in the Dean's family, but expelled from it in 1742, for using personal violence to Swift. See Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 258, and note.

† See his Works, Vol. XIX. p. 254.

Digitized by Google

admirer of music,* yet he possessed the power of mimicking it in a wonderful degree. A person regretting at his table that he had not heard Mr. Rosingrave, then just returned from Italy, perform upon the organ; "You shall hear him now," said Swift, and immediately started off into a burlesque imitation of the chromatics of the musician, to the inexpressible amusement of the company, excepting one old gentleman, who remained unmoved, because, as he said, "he had heard Mr. Rósingrave himself perform the same piece that morning." This exploit led to the Dean's composing the celebrated cantata, burlesquing the doctrine of imitative sounds in poetry and music. It was set to music by Dr. John Ecclin.†

With a great zeal for the rights of his order, which did not, however, in his own opinion, transgress the bounds of toleration, Dean Swift, upon every occasion, when the question occurred, obstinately resisted any relaxation of the penal laws against dissenters. So early as 1708, he had published his Letter on the Sacramental Test,‡ and, about twenty years after, his Narrative of the Attempts of the Dissenters, for the Repeal of the Test Act, appeared in the Correspondent, a periodical paper of that day. This, in 1731,§ he reprinted as an appendix to the "Presbyterians' Plea of Merit," a treatise which gave the dissenters great offence, as it contradicted and even ridiculed their pretensions to peculiar zeal for the reformed religion and the Protestant succession.‖ The clamour which this pamphlet excited, did not prevent Swift from following it up, in the next year, by an ironical statement, entitled, "The Advantages Proposed by Repealing the Sacramental Test." In the same year he published "Queries relating to the Sacramental Test;" and in 1733, "Rea-

* See his verses to himself, in his Works, Vol. XIV. p. 397, beginning,

Grave Dean of St. Patrick's, how comes it to pass,
That you, who know music no more than an ass, &c.

† See Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 262, note.
‡ See p. 65, and Swift's Works, Vol. VIII. p. 351.
§ Ibid. p. 391. ‖ Ibid. p. 375.

Digitized by Google

sons for Repealing the Test in favour of the Roman Catholics;" in all which treatises, the cause of the dissenters was treated with very great severity, and it was more than insinuated, that relaxation ought to be made rather in favour even of the Catholics, than of the Protestant dissenters. The former he compared to a lion, but chained and despoiled of his fangs and claws; the latter to a wild cat loose, in full possession of teeth and talons, and ready to fix them into the Church of England. On the same subject the Dean wrote several fugitive pieces of poetry, and probably more occasional tracts than have yet been recovered.*

While Swift was with one hand combating the dissenters, he maintained with the other a controversy against the majority of the bishops of his own church. After the accession of the House of Hanover, divines of low-church principles were of course selected to fill vacant sees, besides which, in cases where the minister found himself obliged to confer preferment, without a strict regard to character, he naturally inclined to make the party an Irish rather than an English prelate. When some instances of this kind, real or alleged, were lamented in Swift's presence, he denied the imputation, with his usual ironical bitterness. "No blame," he said, "rested with the court for these appointments. Excellent and moral men had been selected upon every

* The following tracts on the same subject have been collected by Dr. Barrett:—

The Test Act examined by the Test of Reason.

Laudatur ab his, culpatur ab illis.

HORAT.

Dublin, printed in the year 1733.

History of the Test Acts, in which the mistakes in some late writings against it are rectified, and the importance of it to the church explained. Printed at London. Dublin, reprinted by George Faulkner, in Essex Street, opposite to the Bridge, 1733.

The case of the Test considered, with respect to Ireland. Dublin, Faulkner, 1733.

The natural impossibilities of better uniting Protestants, &c. by repealing the Test. Dublin, printed by Faulkner, 1733.

Several of his poetical pieces are levelled against the claims of the dissenters; as the Fable of the Bitches, and the Tale of a Nettle, &c.

Digitized by Google

occasion of vacancy. But it unfortunately has uniformly happened, that as these worthy divines crossed Hounslow Heath, on their road to Ireland, to take possession of their bishoprics, they have been regularly robbed and murdered by the highwaymen frequenting that common, who seize upon their robes and patents, come over to Ireland, and are consecrated bishops in their stead."

With such an idea of the Irish prelacy, joined to his native spirit of independence, Swift was induced to regard with a very jealous eye any innovations which they might propose, affecting the great body of the clergy. Under this impression, he wrote, in 1723, "Arguments against enlarging the Power of Bishops in letting Leases," a latitude which, he foreboded, might lead ultimately to the impoverishment of the church. In the same tract he combats some of Lord Molesworth's arguments against the mode of collecting tithes. In 1731, the bishops of Ireland, or a majority of them, brought two bills into Parliament, one for the purpose of enforcing clerical residence, and, with that view, for compelling the clergy to build houses upon their glebes; the other for subdividing large livings into as many portions as the bishops should think fit, reserving to the original church only £300 per annum. In these bills, which were passed in the House of Lords, Swift thought he discovered a scheme on the part of the Irish prelates to impoverish and degrade the body of the clergy, besides subjecting them to the absolute dominion of their spiritual superiors. He argued against the measures with great acrimony, in two tracts, entitled "On the Bill for the Clergy residing upon their Livings," and "Considerations upon two bills sent down from the House of Lords to the House of Commons, relating to the Clergy." Both bills were thrown out by the House of Commons; upon which occasion Swift indulged himself in some bitter poetical satires against the discomfited bishops.* The violence of his dislike to these

* See verses "On the Irish Bishops, 1731," Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 428, and "Judas," Vol. XIV. p. 282; also a Letter to Sheridan, 12th September 1735. Vol. XVIII. p. 370.

Digitized by Google

proceedings breaks out in a private letter to his former friend Dr. Sterne, Bishop of Clogher, in which he entitles them "those two abominable bills for enslaving and beggaring the clergy;" rejoices that he was not in intimate habits with the bishop when he voted for them, lest he should have discovered "marks of indignation, horror, and despair, both in words and deportment;" and concludes with calling God to witness, "that I did then, and do now, and shall for ever, firmly believe, that every bishop who gave his vote for either of these bills, did it with no other view (bating further promotion) than a premeditated design, from the spirit of ambition and love of arbitrary power, to make the whole body of the clergy their slaves and vassals until the day of judgment, under the load of poverty and contempt. I have no room for more charitable thoughts, except for those who will answer now, as they must at that dreadful day, that what they did was out of perfect ignorance, want of consideration, hope of future promotion, (an argument not to be conquered,) or the persuasion of cunninger brethren than themselves; when I saw a bishop, whom I had known so many years, fall into the same *snare*, which word I use in partiality to your lordship. Upon this open avowed attempt, in almost the whole bench, to destroy the church, I resolved to have no more commerce with persons of such prodigious grandeur, who, I feared, in a little time, would expect me to kiss their slipper. It is happy for me that I know the persons of very few bishops; and it is my constant rule never to look into a coach, by which I avoid the terror that such a sight would strike me with." To this violent philippic Bishop Sterne returned a very civil and temperate reply.*

About this period, that is, between 1730 and 1735, the Dean produced some of his best pieces of poetry. The Rhapsody on Poetry, which contains perhaps a more sustained flight of poetical expression than any of his other compositions, is dated in 1733. Dr. King gives us the curious information, that he was

* Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. pp. 145, 212.

Digitized by Google

assured by Swift that he received the thanks of the royal family, who had interpreted literally the ironical passages of praise addressed to them in the poem, —a singular instance of obtuseness of intellect!

The celebrated Verses on Swift's own death were probably written about 1730 or 1731. This singular compound of knowledge of mankind, satire, and misanthropy, is founded upon the well-known maxim of Rochefoucault, "That we find something not unpleasing in the misfortunes of our best friends." A spurious copy, containing only about two hundred lines, was published in London, under the title of the "Life and Character of Dr. Swift, written by himself," with a dedication to Pope. This the Dean, in a letter to his illustrious friend, imputes to his having shown the real poem to his acquaintance, some of whom had retained passages by heart. But he reprobates the spurious piece, as full of the cant which he most despised. "I would sink," he says, "to be a vicar in Norfolk, rather than be charged with such a performance."* In the same letter he expresses his determination not to print the true copy, as being improper to be seen until the author should be no more. On this point he afterwards altered his opinion; and so late as January 1738-9, intrusted Dr. William King of Oxford† with a copy to be published in London. But as the characters of the prime-minister and Queen Caroline were touched with no gentle hand, Dr. King's courage failed him, and the poem was published in a mutilated condition, omitting all such

* Letter to Pope, 1st May 1733. Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 116.

† Dr. William King, son of the Rev. Peregrine King, born in 1685, became Principal of Saint Mary's Hall in 1718. He stood candidate for the University, and being unsuccessful, went over to Ireland in 1727, where he became well known to Swift. His learning, his turn for satire, and a determined spirit of hatred to the existing government, recommended him to Swift, whose confidence he enjoyed. He was long at the head of the Non-juring or Jacobite interest at Oxford, but finally deserted it. Dr. King's Anecdotes of his Own Times have been lately published, and contain some interesting particulars.

Digitized by Google

sarcasms as might be construed into a libel. The Dean, in whose estimation these passages were probably the most valuable part of the poem, was displeased with the caution of his editor; and Faulkner, the Dublin bookseller, published, by his direction, a full and genuine copy of these celebrated verses, with notes at length upon the political allusions, in which the story of the promised medals was not omitted.

To return to the year 1732.—It appears that, about this time, the piracy of the booksellers upon the Dean's literary property had alarmed his friend Pope, who put Swift upon his guard against the solicitations of the London trade, the rather as he himself designed a fourth volume of the Miscellanies, which he published in the month of February 1732-3. His object he states to have been, to secure a genuine edition of the most valuable of the Dean's fugitive pieces, and to anticipate the schemes of the booksellers, who were publishing what they could collect, without discrimination, inserting some of his own fugitive pieces, in hopes, as he modestly expresses himself, "his weeds might pass for a sort of wild flowers" when mingled with his friend's garland.*

But Faulkner, who was now rising into eminence as a Dublin bookseller, chiefly under the countenance and patronage of Dean Swift,† was the first who had

* See Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. pages 43, 86.

† James Hoey, who was at one time a partner of Faulkner, published [without date] a collection of Swift's pieces, in prose and verse, entitled "The Drapier's Miscellany." It contains the following pieces:—

1. The "Modest Proposal" for eating the Children of the Poor.
2. The Journal of a Dublin Lady.
3. Poem to King George, in Lilliputian Verse, beginning "Smile, smile, blest isle." [Spurious.]
4. Namby Pamby.
5. Faithful Inventory of the Household Goods of Dean Swift. [By Sheridan.]
6. Elegy on the death of Demar.
7. Letter in behalf of the parishioners to a Minister who used several hard words in his Sermon. See Swift's Works, Vol. IX. p. 307.

Digitized by Google

the honour of giving to the world a collected and uniform edition of the works of this distinguished English classic. The original edition consisted of four volumes, (increased after the Dean's death by repeated supplements.) The arrangement is uncommonly confused and incoherent; nor is there the least reason for supposing, as seems to be intimated by Lord Orrery, and is positively averred by Wilson in the Swiftiana,* that the Dean himself revised, or even authorized, the publication. Faulkner, after the decay of the Dean's faculties, no doubt found his interest in propagating such a report. But Swift's letters have since shown that he was barely passive upon the occasion. Indeed, far from giving Faulkner authority for the publication, the Dean avers that he expressly told him, he was desirous his works should not be printed in Dublin, but in London. Faulkner replied, that as the pieces were the property of various booksellers, they could not be published in a collected state in England; that he was assured of a numerous list of subscribers; and, hoping the Dean would not be angry at his pursuing his own interest, he intimated an intention to proceed in his purpose, even without permission of the author. This is the more to be regretted, as Charles Ford, whom the Dean had intrusted so often in conveying his publications to the press, had offered the use of his corrected copy of Gulliver's Travels, and other facilities for improving a genuine edition.† Swift, as the laws of Ireland afforded no remedy, had no alternative but

* See Swift's Works, Vol. II. p. 221.

† Ibid. Vol. XVIII. p. 175. There is subjoined to the letter in the original MS. the following postscript:

A Catalogue of Pamphlets and Papers, which I have bound, and those marked * single. I believe I can have any of the others from Ald. B. [Alderman Barber.]

* Conduct of the Allies.

* Remarks on the Barrier Treaty.

* Advice to the October Club.

A new Journey to Paris.

Remarks on the Letter to the Seven Lords appointed to examine Gregg.

Digitized by Google

remaining quiescent; and he repeatedly expresses his regret that the collection had not been published in London, by an agreement among the English booksellers who held his copy-rights, rather than in Dublin. There is, therefore, no room for supposing that this Dublin edition underwent the correction of the Dean; and, indeed, so great was his indifference to literary reputation, that it is possible he would have given himself little trouble upon the matter, even had the book been published in London, as he himself desired.†

* Some Reasons to prove that no Whig is obliged to oppose her Majesty.
Importance of the Guardian.
* Preface to the Bishop of Sarum's Introduction.
Mr. Collins's Discourse of Free-thinking abstracted for the Use of the Poor.
Public Spirit of the Whigs.
* Horace, *Strenuus et Fortis*.
* Examiners, from Number 13 to Number 45.
* Toland's Invitation to Dismal.
* Ballad upon Note in Game.
* Peace and Dunkirk, a Song.
* Windsor Prophecy.
* Hugh (*i. e.* Hue) and Cry after Dismal.
* Pretender's Letter to a Whig Lord.
Some Free Thoughts on the present State of Affairs, never printed.

† See the Dean's sentiments concerning Faulkner's undertaking, in his Works, Vol. XVIII. pp. 83, 300, 315, but particularly a letter to Pope, p. 119, wherein he states his conversation with Faulkner on the subject. The late Mr. Deane Swift used to express great displeasure at Lord Orrery's having insinuated that his distinguished relative had corrected the Dublin edition. The Dean had a regard for Faulkner as an industrious young man, but he was much too frivolous a character to be admitted to his confidence. There is a well-known anecdote, that Faulkner once called on the Dean, full dressed as a fashionable beau of the day. Swift received him as a stranger, with much affected respect, but refused to believe he was George Faulkner. The bookseller was obliged to retire, and reappear in a dress more suited to his station. "Ah, my good friend George," said the Dean, "I am happy to see you! Here was a coxcomb an hour ago, who pretended to pass for you, but I sent him packing." The Dean's acquiescence in Faulkner's edition, though he had no means to prevent it, raised the jealousy of Motte, and other London booksellers, who held his copy-rights. The former filed a bill in Chancery against Faulkner, to prevent the sale of the Dublin edition of Swift's Works in England. Swift

Digitized by Google

The principal interest which Faulkner could claim in the Dean was his having suffered from political prosecution, a fate which, sooner or later, befell most of Swift's publishers. The circumstance arose out of a remarkable incident of the Dean's life, which is now to be narrated.

In a satire printed in 1733, ridiculing the dissenters for pretending to the title of "Brother Protestants, and Fellow Christians," the Dean, among other ludicrous illustrations of their presumption, introduced this simile;

> Thus at the bar the booby B———,
> Though half a crown o'erpays his sweat's worth,
> Who knows in law, nor text, nor margent,
> Calls Singleton his brother Sergeant.

The blank in the termination of the first couplet indicated Mr. Bettesworth, a member of Parliament, and sergeant at law,* remarkable for his florid elocution in the House, and at the bar, who had been very active in promoting those proceedings which Swift regarded as prejudicial to the clergy. Upon reading the lines, he was wrought up to such a height of indignation, that, drawing out a knife, he swore he would, with that very instrument, cut out the Dean's ears. After this denunciation, he went in the height of his fury to the deanery, and from thence to Mr. Worrall's, where Swift was on a visit. The family were at dinner, and the stranger being shown into

interposed on this occasion as mediator, (see his letter to Motte, 25th May 1736, in his Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 480.) and it would appear his mediation was successful, from the subsequent amicable intercourse between the two booksellers.

* The rhyme is said to have been suggested by a casual circumstance. A porter brought a burden to the Dean's house while he was busy with the poem, and labouring to find a rhyme for this uncommon name, the more anxiously, that Bettesworth exulted in the idea of its being impossible. The fellow's demand being considered as exorbitant, he wiped his forehead, saying, with the humour of a low Irishman, "Oh! your reverence, my sweat's worth half a crown." The Dean instantly caught at the words, "Ay, that it is,—there's half a crown for you." This anecdote is given on the authority of Mr. Theophilus Swift.

Digitized by Google

another apartment, the Dean was called out to him. The sergeant advanced to him with great haughtiness, and said, "Doctor Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's, I am Sergeant Bet-tes-worth:" this being his affected mode of pronouncing his name. "Of what regiment?" answered Swift. After a very angry parley, Bettesworth began to raise his voice, and gave such indications of violence, that Mr. Worrall and the servants rushing in, compelled him to withdraw. The tradition in the Dean's family bears, that Bettesworth actually drew his knife; but the Dean's own narrative, transmitted to the lord-lieutenant, does not countenance that last excess, only affirming, that, by Bettesworth's own report, he had a sharp knife in his pocket, and a footman attending in the hall to open the door to one or two ruffians who waited his summons in the street.* The Dean remained composed and unmoved during this extraordinary scene. It was fortunate for the sergeant's person, as well as his character, that he

* Various accounts of this interview have been given, but that of the Dean to the Duke of Dorset, written immediately after it took place, ought to be preferred. Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 192. The following additional circumstances are mentioned by Sheridan. "O Mr. Dean," said Bettesworth, in answer to the retort mentioned in the text, "We know your powers of raillery, you know well enough that I am one of his majesty's sergeants at law."—"What then, sir?"—"Why then, sir, I am come to demand of you, whether you are the author of this poem (producing it) and these villainous lines on me?"—at the same time reading them aloud with great vehemence of emphasis, and much gesticulation.—"Sir," said Swift, "it was a piece of advice given me in my early days by Lord Somers, never to own or disown any writing laid to my charge; because if I did this in some cases, whatever I did not disown afterward would infallibly be imputed to me as mine. Now sir, I take this to have been a very wise maxim, and as such have followed it ever since; and I believe it will hardly be in the power of all your rhetoric, as great a master as you are of it, to make me swerve from that rule." Many other things passed, as related in the above-mentioned letter. But when Bettesworth was going away, he said, "Well, since you will give me no satisfaction in this affair, let me tell you, your gown is your protection; under the sanction of which, like one of your own Yahoos who had climbed up to the top of a high tree, you sit secure, and squirt your filth round on all mankind." Swift had candour enough, not to conceal this last circumstance, at the same time saying, "that the fellow showed more wit in this than he thought him possessed of."

Digitized by Google

did not proceed in his meditated vengeance on the person of an old man, and a clergyman, since the attempt must have been made at the risk of his life. So soon as the news transpired, the inhabitants of that part of Dublin, called Earl of Meath's Liberty, assembled, and sent a deputation to Swift, requesting his permission to take vengeance on Bettesworth, for his intended violence to the Patriot of Ireland. Swift returned them thanks for their zeal, but enjoined them to disperse peaceably, and, adding a donation of two or three guineas, prohibited them from getting drunk with the money, adding, "You are my subjects, and I expect you will obey me." It is no slight proof of the despotism of his authority, founded as it was solely upon respect and gratitude, that his defenders complied with his recommendation in both particulars, and peaceably and soberly separated to their dwellings. For some time, however, they formed a guard among themselves for the purpose of watching the deanery, and the person of the Drapier, lest Bettesworth should have adopted any new scheme of violence.

The consequences of this rashness were very serious to Mr. Bettesworth, for not only was he overwhelmed by the Dean and his friends with satire and ridicule, to which he had shown himself so keenly sensible,* but, in the bitterness of his heart, he confessed, in the House of Commons, that Swift's satire had deprived him of twelve hundred pounds a-year. Yet his irritability was rather increased than allayed by this unpleasing result, as appears from a subsequent instance.

Dr. Josiah Horte, Bishop of Kilmore, afterwards Archbishop of Tuam, although he had formerly been himself an object of Swift's satire,† was now advan-

* "Bettesworth's Exultation," Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 438. "Epigram inscribed to the Honourable Sergeant Kite," now first recovered, Ib. p. 440. "The Yahoo's Overthrow, or the Kevan Bayle's new Ballad," Ib. p. 441. "On the Archbishop of Cashel and Bettesworth," Ib. p. 445.

† See the "Storm, or Minerva's Petition," Swift's Works, Vol. XIV. p. 320, in which Bishop Berkeley's morals are complimented.

Digitized by Google

ced so far into his intimacy, that the Dean, in 1736, condescended to be the prelate's agent, in correcting and transmitting to Faulkner, a satire composed by Horte, upon the general taste for Quadrille;* or, in the quaint words of the bishop's request, "he pruned the loose feathers, sent the kite to the Falconer, and set it a-flying." The satire was of a very general and common-place kind, but unfortunately proposed, among other regulations, that all disputes and altercations at play should be laid before the "renowned Sergeant B————," with a fee of one fish, *ad valorem*, and a right of appeal to a wooden figure in Essex-street, known by the name of the Upright Man, in case the sergeant's decision should be unsatisfactory. This insinuation was sufficient to rouse the angry feelings of Mr. Bettesworth, who, although the name was dropped out of subsequent editions of the satire, thought it worth his while to complain to the House of Commons of breach of privilege. Faulkner the printer was arrested, put to considerable expense, and thrown into jail among ordinary felons, though he prayed to be admitted to bail. The Dean, whose blood boiled at these tyrannical proceedings, avenged himself upon Hartley Hutchinson,† the justice of peace who signed the committal, by two or three severe lampoons, and wrote, upon the same occasion, the indignant lines commencing,

> Better we all were in our graves,
> Than live in slavery to slaves.‡

at the expense of those of his brother prelate. Horte is there termed Bishop Judas; but it seems uncertain whether he is the prelate designated by the same hateful epithet, in the verses so entitled. Ibid. p. 282. The chief motive of the Dean's complaisance seems to have been a hope that Horte might be induced to provide for Sheridan. Ibid. Vol. XIX. p. 69.

* "A new Proposal for the better Regulation and Improvement of Quadrille." Ibid. Vol. VII. p. 372.

† See a Vindication of the Libel, Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 468, and a Friendly Apology for a certain Justice of Peace. Ibid. p. 469.

‡ The sentiment expressed in this couplet seems to have occupied the Dean's mind much at the time. It is written down with

Digitized by Google

Faulkner naturally looked to Horte for some indemnification; but the bishop intimated to him, "that in such dealings the bookseller is the adventurer, and must run the hazard of gain or loss." This sordid and unhandsome evasion occasioned Swift's writing to the bishop a very severe letter, which, it is to be presumed, produced the bookseller some more satisfactory answer.*

In 1733, the Dean's attention was attracted to some proceedings in the Irish Parliament, which seemed to him subversive of the rights of the clergy. A bill had been brought into the House of Commons for encouraging the linen manufactory, containing a clause for commuting, by a perpetual modus, the tithe payable on the articles of hemp and flax. The Dean, with Grattan, Jackson, and other clergymen, on behalf of the clergy of Ireland, presented a petition, praying to be heard by counsel against this part of the bill; and Swift composed, on the same subject, a treatise addressed to the members of the House of Commons.† The bill appears, in consequence of this opposition, to have been dropt; but subsequent vexations arose to the clergy from the same quarter.

In 1734, an almost general resistance was made against the tithe of pasturage, or tithe of agistment, as it is technically called. The House of Commons interfered against this claim on the part of the clergy, and so effectually, that the clergy were intimidated from making, and courts of law deterred from receiving, suits upon that ground. The Dean and many of his brethren viewed the conduct of the Commons on this occasion as partial and oppressive,—partial, because so many of the

one or two trifling variations upon several memorandum papers. See the verses, in his Works, Vol. XII. p. 467.

* Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 471. In a subsequent letter to Sheridan, the Dean says, "I did write him, [Bishop Horte,] lately, a letter with a witness, relating to his printing Quadrille, (did you ever see it,) with which he half ruined Faulkner. He promises, against his nature, to consider him, but interposed an exception which I believe will destroy the whole." Ibid. Vol. XIX. p. 69.

† "Some reasons against the bill for settling the tithe of hemp, flax, &c. by a modus." Swift's Works, Vol. VIII. p. 334.

Digitized by Google

members were affected by that claim, that they might be considered as judging in their own cause, and oppressive, because Swift conceived that the tithe for agistment was as plainly comprised in the act of Henry VIII. as that of corn and hay. Other cases occurred about the same time, which seemed to indicate a general disposition on the part of the great land-proprietors to innovate upon the rights of the church. A cruel and exaggerated instance was the case of the Reverend Roger Throp, who, refusing to surrender to the patron of his living, Colonel Waller, some of its most important rights, is alleged to have been harassed by so many law-suits, assaults, and arrests, that his courage and health gave way under them, and he actually died of a broken heart. Robert Throp, brother of the deceased, presented to Parliament a petition, stating the manifold grievances which his deceased relation had sustained from Colonel Waller, and praying the House to permit the course of law to proceed against him by arrest, notwithstanding his being a member of Parliament. About November 1735, while this petition was in dependence, the Dean appears to have written for the newspapers a statement of Mr. Throp's case, which produced on the colonel's part an advertisement, offering a reward for discovery of the author.* When the

* On 8th November 1735, Mrs. Whiteway writes to the Dean, "Mr. Waller has printed an advertisement, offering ten guineas reward to any person that will discover the author of a paragraph, said to be the case of one Mr. Throp. I do not know whether you heard any thing of such an affair before you left town, but I think it is said there is some trial to be about it before the House of Commons, either next week, or the week following. I beg you will not leave your papers and letters on the table, as you used to do at the Deanery, for boys and girls and wives will be peeping." Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 404.

To this hint the Dean replies, "As to Waller's advertisement, if I was in town I would, for the ten guineas, let him know the author of the narrative; and I wish you would, by a letter in an unknown hand, inform him of what I say; for I want the money to repair some deficiencies here." Ibid. p. 441. It would be satisfactory to discover the Dean's "paragraph," which, from the date and internal evidence, must have been distinct from the octavo pamphlet on the same subject, entitled, "Lay Tyranny, or the Clergy Oppressed by Patrons and Impropriators, instanced in

Digitized by Google

petition came before the House, it was refused unanimously.

These combined circumstances induced Swift to regard the existing Irish House of Commons as determined enemies to the rights of the church, and as leagued to oppress the clergy. He gave vent to his indignation in more than one satire, but particularly in the last poem of any length or importance which he ever composed, entitled the Legion Club. Old age had now long overtaken him, and even when he was holding the pen on this occasion, he had a continued and intense attack of his constitutional vertigo, from which he never fully recovered. The Legion Club is notwithstanding one of the most animated and poignant satires that even the Dean of St. Patrick's ever produced. It seems almost impossible that the poet should have sustained the extreme virulence of invective with which the description opens. Yet, when the poet descends from general to individual satire, every line has the sting of a hornet. The persons chiefly satirized in this remarkable production, are Sir Thomas Prendergast, Colonel Waller, and other members whom the Dean regarded as most active in opposing the claims of the clergy. "The puppy pair of Dicks," Richard Tighe and Richard Bettesworth, his old foes, are not forgotten. The poem was no sooner published, than spurious copies appeared, in which the number of individuals satirized was considerably enlarged. It gave great offence, as may easily be supposed, and prosecutions were threatened, but none took place.*

About the same time the Dean opposed a scheme proposed by the primate Boulter for regulating the exchange of Ireland, by diminishing the value of the gold coin, which his lordship presaged would be the readiest mode of increasing the quantity of silver currency, of which the want had been much felt. The Dean had a dislike to the primate, which was by no

the memorable case of the Reverend Mr. Roger Throp." Dublin, 1739.

* See letter from Swift to Sheridan, Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 70.

Digitized by Google

means lessened by his being the real and efficient prime-minister for Ireland, and the chief correspondent of Walpole upon matters affecting that kingdom. He had exercised his satire upon him accordingly.* But at the time of lowering the gold coin, Swift's exertions excited a ferment, which, though it subsided sooner, and without producing any change in the intended measure, resembled, in other respects, the opposition to Wood's scheme. The Dean spoke against the measure at the Tholsel or Exchange of Dublin;† he distributed songs among the people; and on the day when the proclamation was read, displayed a black flag from the steeple of the cathedral, and caused a dumb or muffled peal to be rung by the bells of St. Patrick's. The discontent of the lower orders was so great, that danger was apprehended to the primate's person, and his house was guarded by soldiers. At the lord mayor's entertainment, the archbishop publicly charged Swift with having inflamed the prejudices of the people against him. "I inflame them!" retorted Swift, conscious of his power among the lower orders, "had I lifted my finger, they would have torn you to pieces,"—a threat which he afterwards expressed in poetry.‡ The measure of lowering the gold coin, however, proved practically advantageous, and the clamour which it excited was speedily forgotten.

* See an epigram, Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 455. Also "The verses on Rover, a Lady's Spaniel," Vol. XIV. p. 381. These were written in ridicule of what was called Philips' Namby-Pamby verses, the mistress of the spaniel being Mrs. Boulter, who was very fat. The primate was the patron of Philips, and brought him to Ireland as his secretary, which probably did not increase Swift's respect for him. Hence the line of Pope,

"Still to our bishop Philips seems a wit."

† See Mrs. Whiteway's letter to Sheridan, "The Dean, this day, (24th April 1736,) went to the Tholsel as a merchant, to sign a petition to the government against lowering the gold, where we hear he made a long speech, for which he will be reckoned a Jacobite." Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 470.

‡ See "Ay and No, a tale from Dublin." Swift's Works, Vol. XII. p. 471. Also a ballad (now first published) on the lowering the coin, which alludes to the circumstances of the muffled peal and black flag. Ibid. p. 473.

Digitized by Google

Thus ended Swift's last interference in public affairs, in which, excepting during the earlier part of George I.'s reign, he had been actively and often perilously engaged from 1708 to 1736. He continued, however, on all occasions, to express and maintain his original sentiments, of which he was so tenacious, that he refused to accept of the freedom of the city of Cork, until they recorded upon the instrument of freedom, and the silver box in which it was presented, their approbation of his political and patriotic principles, as the ground of distinguishing him by such an honour.* At a subsequent period of extreme weakness, Bishop Rundle has mentioned with indecent triumph, especially considering he had called Swift friend, an instance that his political dislike survived the decay of his mental faculties. In 1741-2, upon the reported disgrace of Lord Orford, he set up an equipage.† Nor is it to be forgot-

* See the Dean's letter to the Mayor and Corporation of Cork, 15th August 1737, in his Works, Vol. XIX. p. 99.

† The Dean used formerly to say, that he was the poorest man in Ireland who was served in plate, and the richest who kept no carriage. The account of his setting up one is thus given by Bishop Rundle, in a letter preserved in the British Museum. "As soon as Dean Swift heard that Lord Orford, was dismissed from power, he awakened with one flash of light from his dreaming of what he once was, and cried, I made a vow that I would set up a coach when that man was turned out of his places; and having the good fortune to behold that day, long despaired of, I will show that I was sincere: and sent for a coach-maker. The operator comes, had one almost ready,—it was sent home,—horses were purchased,—and the Dean entered the triumphant double chariot, supported by two old women, and his daily flatterer, to entertain him with the only music he had an ear to hear at this age; they made up the partie quarree, and, with much ado, enabled his decrepit reverence to endure the fatigue of travelling twice round our great square, by the cordial and amusement of their fulsome commendations, which he calls facetious pleasantry. But the next pacquet brought word, (what lying varlets these news-writers are!) that Lord Orford's party revived, &c. Swift sunk back in the corner of the coach, his under jaw fell; he was carried up to his chamber and great chair, and obstinately refused to be lifted into the treacherous vehicle any more, till the newswriters at least shall be hanged for deceiving him to imagine that Lord Orford was *bona fide* out of power, though visibly out of place. Now he despairs of seeing vengeance taken on any, who, odd fellow! he thinks more richly deserve it; and since he cannot send them out of the world

Digitized by Google

ten, that Bolingbroke and Pulteney fed his antipathy against Walpole and the royal family, by regularly transmitting to him the lampoons of the day.*

But although the Dean must from henceforward be considered as having ceased entirely to interest himself in the politics of the day, his mind, as is usual in age, appears to have reverted to those earlier scenes in which he once played a busy part, and he became, in 1737, desirous of publishing the History of the Peace of Utrecht, which he had written in 1714. With this view, he gave the manuscript, now entitled "The History of the Four last Years of Queen Anne," to Dr.

with dishonour, he intends soon to go out of it in a pet."—Letter signed Thomas Derry, dated March 20, 1741-2. MSS. Birch, 4291. *British Museum.*

The Bishop is incorrect in supposing that Swift laid aside the equipage which was thus set up. It appears from Wilson's affidavit, (Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 259, note,) that Swift, in July 1742, had a carriage of his own.

* The Dean has labelled a paper containing three such lampoons, "An excellent satyr, prose part and part verse, received November 1st, 1738." The verses are a burlesque birth-day ode for 1738, (by Pulteney or Chesterfield,) in the assumed person of "Colley Bays, Esq.;" and some lines on a coinage having been sent abroad, without the words *Dei Gratia* in the legend. Both have been printed. The prose lampoon is less known, and shall be inserted as a curiosity.

Supposed to be written on account of three gentlemen being seen in Kensington Gardens by the King and Queen while they were walking.

"Now it came to pass in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, in the 8th month, in the 6th year of the King, in the beginning of hay harvest, that the King and the Queen walked arm-in-arm in the gardens which they had planted upon the banks of the river, the great river Euphrates; and behold there appeared on a sudden three armed men, sons of the giants; then Nebuchadnezzar the King lifted up his voice and cried, Oh, men of war, who be ye, who be ye? and is it peace? But they answered him not. Then spake he and said, There is treachery, Oh, my Queen, there is treachery; and he turned his face and fled. Now when the Queen had seen what had befallen my Lord the King, she girt up her loins and fled also, crying Oh, my God! So the King and the Queen ran together, but the King outran her mightily, for he ran very swiftly, neither turned he to the right hand nor to the left, for he was sore afraid where no fear was, and fled when no man pursued."

Digitized by Google

King of Oxford, that it might be printed in London. A report of his intention having transpired, seems to have alarmed the Earl of Oxford, (son of the celebrated statesman,) Mr. Lewis, (under secretary of state during the last years of Queen Anne,) and other persons concerned, who feared lest the Dean, in his state of mind and body, might be inadequate to the delicate task of correcting a work in which the characters of Harley and all who had acted with him were deeply implicated. Mr. Lewis pressed, in their common name, to be permitted to see the manuscript before it was sent to press; a request which the Dean granted with hesitation and reluctance.* The "History" was accordingly perused by Lord Oxford and some of his friends, and, in a letter from Mr. Lewis, they state various objections to its appearing in its original state. Several of these apply to what may be considered as the *speciosa miracula* of the Dean's narrative, such as the imputations on the courage of Marlborough, and the insinuation that Prince Eugene recommended the assassination of Harley. But they principally demurred to the manner in which the Dean had drawn several characters of the leading Whigs, and expressed their conviction that, if the History were published without alteration, nothing could save the printer and publisher from some grievous punishment. Lewis, therefore, conjured the Dean, by his own fame, and that of those friends whom he meant to honour by his narrative, and as he valued his personal liberty, and the enjoyment of his fortune, not to permit the manuscript to be printed until he had adopted the amendments his letter suggested.† The Dean, un-

* See a letter from Mr. Lewis, anxiously pressing this request, 30th June 1737. Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 87, with the Dean's answer, 8th April, p. 93, intimating some difficulty in complying with it. Mr. Lewis again writes upon the same subject, 4th August following, and the Dean appears reluctantly to have acquiesced.

† This important letter, which contains the real reason for suppressing the "History," is dated 8th April 1738. It is now first published in the edition of Swift's Works, to which these Memoirs are prefixed, Vol. XIX. p. 133. It is quoted in the Dean's hand, "On some mistakes in the History of Four last Years," with the remarkable addition, "*Mon ami prudent.*"

Digitized by Google

able or unwilling to attempt the required alterations, silently acquiesced in the opinion happily expressed by Lewis, that the period of which he treated was too remote for a pamphlet, yet too early for a history.* What became of the original manuscript does not appear; but the History was published in 1758, by an anonymous editor, who professes to give it as a literary curiosity, from a copy which had been accidentally preserved in Ireland. The whole preface sustains a high and violent tone of Whig politics. To such an uncongenial editor was the Dean to owe a posthumous obligation, for publishing a work suppressed during his lifetime at the request, or rather the entreaty, of his Tory friends. The History was coldly received by the public, as relating to events gone by and forgotten. A French version of it appeared in 1765.†

It was through the medium of Dr. King that Swift sent to the press, as already observed, the "Verses on his own Death," and he seems also to have meditated the publication of his well-known Instructions to Servants, on which, though it only exists as a fragment, he had bestowed much pains and observation. He himself was a kind, but a strict master, and his mode of managing his domestics would hardly have succeeded with any one but himself, who had established his will as despotic, however capricious.‡ He was equally minute

* See Dr. King's Letter of 23d January 1738-9. Swift's Works, Vol XIX. p. 179, in which, however, there was an important paragraph omitted by the transcriber, as I am informed by Mr. Theophilus Swift. After the word "*direct*," p. 180, and before commencing the next paragraph, the original manuscript proceeds thus:—

"I say nothing about your manuscript of the History, because I have been assured by Lord Orrery and Mr. Pope that you are satisfied with Mr. Lewis's, and have suspended the publication of that work in consequence of his representation."

This passage sums up the evidence concerning the suppression of the History of the Four last Years of Queen Anne.

† Somewhat too amply entitled "Histoire du Regne de la Reine, Anne d'Angleterre," 8vo, with a fictitious Amsterdam title-page.

‡ The story is well known of his commanding "Sweetheart," as he called his cookmaid Mary, to carry down a joint of meat and do it *less*, and on her alleging that was impossible, his grave request, that when in future she pleased to commit a fault, he hoped she

Digitized by Google

in observing the servants of others, and told Lord Orrery one day, that the attendant who waited had committed fifteen faults during the time of dinner. Yet his mode of reprimanding them was more frequently whimsical than harsh. Upon one occasion, a servant waiting at table had displeased him;—there was laver on the table, called in Ireland sloak, which Mrs. Whiteway was fond of; the Dean had tasted and disliked it, but said nothing, till about to reprove the man, when

would choose one which might be mended. Upon another occasion, after he had permitted Sweetheart to set out on a journey to see a sister's wedding, he sent for her back, by express, to shut the door. At another time, hearing one of his servants in the act of undressing, express a luxurious wish that he could ride to bed, the Dean summoned the man up stairs, commanded him to fetch a horse from the paddock, and prepare him for a journey, and when the poor fellow reported that the horse was ready, "Mount him then, sirrah," said the Dean, "and ride to bed." There is another well-attested anecdote, communicated by the late Mr. William Waller of Allanstown, near Kells, to Mr. Theophilus Swift. Mr. Waller, while a youth, was riding near his father's house, where he met a gentleman on horseback reading. A little surprised, he asked the servant, who followed at some distance, where they came from? "From the Black Lion," answered the man. "And where are you going?"—"To heaven, I believe," rejoined the servant, "for my master's praying and I am fasting." On further enquiry, it proved that the Dean, who was then going to Laracor, had rebuked this man for presenting him in the morning with dirty boots. "Were they clean," answered the fellow, "they would soon be dirty again."—"And if you eat your breakfast," retorted the Dean, "you will be hungry again, so you shall proceed without it," which circumstance gave rise to the man's bon-mot. Another instance of his strict discipline, communicated by Mr. Swift, shall close this long note.

"He was dining one day in the country, and at going away the servant of the family brought him his horse. As the man held the horse, the Dean called to his own man, and asked him whether it would not be proper to give something to the servant for his trouble? The man assented, and the Dean asked him what he thought would be proper to give the man, and whether half a crown was too much? 'No, sir!'—'Very well,' replied Swift, and gave the man the half crown. When the board-wages of the week came to be paid, he stopt the half crown, and reads his servant a lecture; telling him, it was his duty to attend him, and not to leave him to the care of others; that he brought him to the house that he might not give trouble to others; and pressed his argument by supposing he would not in future be quite so generous of his master's money."

Digitized by Google

he broke out with "you-you-you worse than sloak." Sometimes he chose to mix in the mirth of his domestics. Once finding that his housekeeper, Mrs. Ridgeway, had, according to custom, on his birth-day, made an entertainment for the neighbours, he requested to know at whose expense the treat was provided, and understanding that he himself was the founder of the feast, he sat down among the guests, and partook of their cheer with great good humour. Upon another occasion, he and some friends resolved to celebrate a classical Saturnalia at the deanery, and actually placed their servants at table while they themselves attended on them. The butler, who represented the Dean, acted his master to the life. He sent Swift to the cellar in quest of some particular wine, then affected to be discontented with the wine he brought, and commanded him to bring another sort. The Dean submissively obeyed, took the bottle to the side-board and decanted it, while the butler still abused him in his own style, and charged him with reserving some of the grounds for his own drinking. The Dean, it was observed, did not altogether relish the jest, but it was carried on as long as it gave amusement; when the tables were removed, the scene reversed, an entertainment served up to the proper guests, and every thing conducted by the very servants who had partaken of the Saturnalia, in an orderly and respectful manner.* These anecdotes serve to show that the Dean took a particular pleasure in observing this class of society, and explain the extraordinary insight which he had obtained into their habits and character. The Instructions to Servants form only a fragment. The Dean had intended a more regular work, but indisposition interrupted his labours.†

* This anecdote is given by Mr. Theophilus Swift, on the authority of Mrs. Whiteway. It appears in an exaggerated and distorted form in the Swiftiana, Vol. II. p. 54. where it is said there was a purpose to make the Saturnalia annual, but that the Dean, unable to endure the raillery of the butler, gave a loose to passion, beat his representative, and drove the servants out of the room. For these additions, I am informed by Mr. Swift, there is no foundation.

† The following is a fragment of an intended preface. It occurs

Digitized by Google

In 1738 and 1739, he expresses, by repeated enquiries at Faulkner, some anxiety about a part of the manuscript.* It was not, however, published until after his death. This is almost the last literary subject in which Swift seems to have been interested.

We return to the private life of Swift subsequent to 1732. The incidents are short and melancholy. For a while his correspondence with Pope, Bolingbroke, Gay, and the Dutchess of Queensberry, Gay's lively and spirited patroness, sustained his connexion with England. Bolingbroke attempted, so late as 1732, to negotiate an exchange of his deanery with the living of Burfield in Berkshire.† But it was too late. The sacrifice of dignity and income, considerable at any time, became impossible after the habits of nearly twenty years. The die was therefore cast, and Swift was to close his days in the country of his birth, not in that of his choice. Indeed, although his dislike to Ireland does not appear to have abated in its acrimony, his desire to exchange

in the original draught of the instructions, but is in many places effaced and illegible. I am indebted to Mr. Theophilus Swift for a copy of that which remains intelligible.

* * * [*Two or three words wanting.*] "A Preface to Servants.

"I have calculated these directions chiefly for town-servants; yet have here and there scattered some proper for the country. I have likewise considered some things only for private families, from *L.*400 to *L.*1000 *per annum;* but others for great persons and gentlemen of plentiful estates.

"I left my master, who had got the house-maid with child, and he gave me a portion to marry her, and got me an office in the customs.

"There are some *ways* of servants, that I cannot give a reason for; however, for *honour* I have mentioned them; because I doubt not there was some reason for it.

"Add the directions without reason at the end, in a different letter. My directions are fitted for families from *L.*400 to ten or twenty thousand pounds. The reader will not blame us for being so large on footmen, having been one myself, &c.

"Gil Blas hath mentioned something of servants, &c. but not in my way. [Here follow some imperfect passages.] The precedence of servants of both sexes, regulated at home, and with strangers; the latter according to their masters. Jack Somerset takes place of Dick Devonshire."

* Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 163.

† Ibid. Vol. XVIII. p. 16.

Digitized by Google

his residence there for an abode in England must have been gradually diminished, as, in the language of the poet,

"Tie after tie was loosened from his heart;"

and when his remnant of life could only be spent in melancholy recollections of the past, or anxious anticipations of the future.

The sudden death of the kind-hearted and affectionate Gay was the first severe shock of this nature. Pope's letter announcing this event is endorsed by Swift, "Received December 15th, (1732,) but not read till the 20th, by an impulse foreboding some misfortune." The death of Arbuthnot followed in 1734-5. Swift thus expresses himself to Pope on the breaches thus made among their friends: "The death of Mr. Gay and the Doctor have been terrible wounds near my heart. Their living would have been a great comfort to me, although I should never have seen them; like a sum of money in a bank, from which I should receive at least annual interest, as I do from you, and have done from my Lord Bolingbroke."* Lady Masham, the moving spring of Queen Anne's last administration and Swift's firm friend, died about the same period, and the Earl of Peterborough followed, in the year 1735. Bolingbroke and Pope remained; but the former seeing all his political hopes blighted, retired in disgust to France in 1734, and ill health on both sides gradually slackened Swift's intercourse with the Bard of Twickenham. But it is a false and malicious insinuation of the notorious Mrs. Pilkington, that there was any relaxation in the mutual regard of the illustrious friends; Lord Orrery, who had the best access to know, has given testimony, and produced proof, that their friendship remained sincere and perfect on both sides till closed by death. On the presentation copy of the Dunciad, with which she pretends the Dean was but little pleased, Swift has written *Auctoris Amicissimi Donum*,—an expression of superlative warmth.

The Dean's health was now gradually giving way under the pressure of age, and his recurring fits of deaf-

* Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 311.

Digitized by Google

ness and giddiness. His judgment and powers of thought continued indeed clear during the intervals of his disorder; but his memory became imperfect, and his temper, always irritable, was now subject to violent and frantic fits of passion upon slight provocation. These inroads upon his faculties were precursors of the final disorder whose approach he had long dreaded. So early as 1717,* we are informed by Dr. Young, that, while walking with Swift about a mile out of Dublin, the Dean stopped short. "We passed on," says the author of the Night Thoughts, "but perceiving he did not follow us, I went back and found him fixed as a statue, and earnestly gazing upward at a noble elm, which, in its uppermost branches, was much withered and decayed. Pointing at it, he said, 'I shall be like that tree, I shall die at the top.'" Orrery also informs us, that when the Dean, in conversation, dwelt upon the period of mental imbecility which closed the lives of Somers, Marlborough, and other distinguished contemporaries, it was never without a deep and anxious presage of his own fate. To the same feeling of internal decay may be traced his answer to a friend who mentioned some one as a fine old gentleman: "What!" said the Dean with violence, "have you yet to learn that there is no such thing as a fine old gentleman? If the man you speak of had either a mind or body worth a farthing, they would have worn him out long ago."†

* The date is assigned from Dr. Johnson's (or Mr. Croft's) probable conjecture, that Dr. Young accompanied his witty and profligate patron, the Duke of Wharton, to Ireland in that year. When Wharton related some of his mischievous pranks to the Dean, (who really esteemed his talents,) he made this remarkable answer, "Take a frolic to be virtuous, my lord; it will give you more pleasure than any you have yet tried." Delany has somewhat injured this anecdote, by substituting the word *honour* for *pleasure*. Swift has ridiculed Young's bombast in his simile upon that poet and Philips. But in the Verses on Young's Satire, and in the Rhapsody on Poetry, he seems rather to censure Young's politics than his talents.

† At one time he requested Mrs. Whiteway to mention to him any decay which she might observe in his faculties:—"No, Sir," she replied; "I have read Gil Blas." A similar story is recorded by Mr. Sheridan of his father, who, (less prudent,) complied with the request, and extorted from the Dean the question, "Whether he had ever read Gil Blas."

Digitized by Google

It would be vain to enquire, whether this awful foreboding, becoming more terrible as its accomplishment approached nearer, influenced Swift in the disposal of his fortune; whether he took the hint of establishing a Lunatic Asylum from a letter of Sir William Fownes upon that subject;* or whether, as he himself alleges,

> He gave the little wealth he had,
> To build a house for fools or mad,
> To show, by one satiric touch,
> No nation wanted it so much.†

Such, however, was the resolution he formed, and it was his first intention to endow his purposed hospital with land to the extent of three hundred pounds per annum; but after in vain endeavouring to make such a purchase, and even advertising for that purpose,‡ he at length suffered his fortune to remain upon the various mortgages in which it was vested, and left to his executors the trouble of collecting and investing it in land. Nor was he less anxious about the site of his intended hospital. In 1734-5, he presented a memorial to the corporation of Dublin, praying that a piece of ground on Oxmantown-green might be assigned for this purpose, which request was immediately complied with.§ In

* Dated, 9th September 1732. It is a proposal for building a Receptacle for Lunatics. See Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 44.

† Verses on his own death, in his Works, Vol. XIV. p. 369.

‡ See this advertisement, Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. p. 14-, and his correspondence with Mr. Gerrard, Ibid. p. 147.

§ No. IV. Extracts from the London and Dublin Magazine, or Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer. London printed, and Dublin reprinted for George Faulkner, for the year 1735.

N.B. This was a piratical re-impression, or Dublin edition, of the London Magazine.

January 21, 1734-5.—On Friday last, the following memorial was presented at the quarterly assembly of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Gommon-Council:

"To the Right Honourable the Lord-Mayor, &c. the Memorial of the Dean of St. Patrick's,

"Sheweth,—That the said Dean having, by his last will and testament, settled his whole fortune to erect and endow an Hospital, in or near this city, for the support of idiots and lunatics, and being advised that a plot of ground in Oxmantown-green would be a convenient place whereon to erect the said Hospital, he therefore humbly desires, that your Lordship, and this honourable board, will

Digitized by Google

1737, a mortmain act was in agitation, for preventing settlement of landed property upon the church, or upon public charities. The Dean presented a petition to the House of Lords to be excepted from this bill, in case it should pass into a law. The petition stated, that he had long since bequeathed his fortune to charitable uses for the benefit of the kingdom; and if the exception which he prayed for should not be granted, he would be under the necessity of remitting it abroad for the same pious and worthy purposes. The mortmain bill did not pass into a law, and the exception became unnecessary. From the repeated statement in these proceedings, that the Dean had long since settled his estate for the benefit of the intended foundation, it appears that his existing will, dated 3d May 1740, was not the first destination of his property. The funds which finally devolved upon the hospital, amounted to above ten thousand pounds, which was the sum of Swift's savings in the course of about thirty years.

The internal regulation of Swift's family had for some years been under the management of his kind and affectionate relation Mrs. Whiteway.* She was the daughter of Adam Swift, the Dean's uncle, and was the only relation to whom he ever showed any attachment; a distinction which she has been thought to owe to her not bearing the family name. It was a littleness in the mind of Swift, that the recollection of the parsimonious

please to grant him such a plot of ground on the said green, and for the said use, upon such terms as your Lordship and Worships shall think fit."

"The Lord-Mayor, Aldermen, and Common-Council, were pleased to order a committee to inspect the said green, for the most convenient plot of ground whereon to erect the said Hospital."

March 1735.

* Hawkesworth erroneously, or injuriously, represented Mrs. Whiteway as the Dean's housekeeper. Nothing could be more incorrect. She was a lady of talents, fashion, and independent fortune, from whom the late Mr. Theophilus Swift inherited a considerable estate in the county of Limerick. Mrs. Whiteway was twice married. Her first husband was the Rev. Theophilus Harrison, Dean of Clenmacnoise. A daughter of this marriage married Mr. Deane Swift, and was the mother of my late obliging correspondent, to whom the reader, as well as the editor, is so much indebted.

Digitized by Google

education he had received from his uncle Godwin mixed in almost every reflection which he turned towards his relatives. In his correspondence, he repeatedly declares his dislike to his own family, although he sometimes makes a cold exception in favour of Mr. Deane Swift,* the grandson of his uncle Godwin, and representative, though by that unpleasant link, of his favourite ancestor, Thomas, the loyal vicar of Goodrich. Even to this young gentleman the Dean extended no share of effectual patronage; and the only influence which his relationship produced upon his kinsman's fortunes was of an unfavourable nature. Mr. Deane Swift, however, paid the cold and reluctant courtesy of his illustrious relative with the warmest attachment, and vindicated his memory, after death, from the charges of Lord Orrery. Yet how little he owed to his patronage, will appear from the following remarkable anecdote. Sir Robert Walpole offered Mr. Deane Swift preferment in the church, if he chose to take orders. Mr. Deane Swift was then considerably indebted to his distinguished kinsman; and, influenced also by his habits of attachment and respect, consulted him on the flattering proposal thus made to him. The Dean, indignant at the idea of his kinsman receiving any favour from Walpole, insisted on his rejecting the minister's proposal; but never took measures to compensate him for the injury which his fortunes thus sustained.† To account for this

* By a singular coincidense, this gentleman bore both the family name of the author and the clerical title by which he was universally distinguished. But he derived his Christian name of Deane from his grandmother, Miss Deane, daughter and heiress of Admiral Deane, who served the Parliament with eclat during the civil wars.

† It is proper to give this remarkable anecdote in the words of the late son and representative of Mr. Deane Swift.—"My father, having an easy fortune, had taken to no profession. He was an excellent scholar, but a very bad writer. No man of his day understood the Greek language better; and he was familiar with all the Oriental languages. He was a very moral man; and, from an innate love of religion, had made divinity his immediate study. He had taken a degree of A. M. at Oxford, and was in every respect qualified for an excellent divine. Walpole knew him, and one day sent for him. He went; and Walpole asked him, whether it was his in-

Digitized by Google

extreme and unjust violence, it is proper to remember, that the Dean was now in a state of infirmity, when passion and prejudice had begun to obscure the fine sense and judgment which they at length altogether eclipsed. But to Mrs. Whiteway Swift was uniformly kind, and repaid with esteem and gratitude the assiduity with which she watched over his family affairs, his char-

tention to take orders? My father was then about twenty-seven years of age. He answered, he had no such design. Walpole then desired that he would think of it, and that he would provide for him in the church; and even went so far as to tell him, that, at a proper time, he would make him a bishop. Swift very soon heard of what had passed, and sent for my father, whom he asked concerning the truth of the fact. Swift soon perceived that Walpole designed to prefer his relation over his head; and that while the Dean could not make *himself* a bishop, no impediment stood in the way of people who bore his name. Swift remonstrated very strongly with my father, who did not choose to give up the prospects held out to him. But Swift was *absolute* on all occasions. Whatever he said or willed must be obeyed. Beside the respect that my father had for him, which approached almost to idolatry, he owed him £2500, an immense sum in those days; his estates were mortgaged for it to the Dean. The Dean did not absolutely promise a remission of the debt, but signified in very indignant terms, that if he did not relinquish orders, he would always find him his enemy; but if he would give up the idea of orders, he (the Dean) would always be his friend, and would *provide for him in the state.* My father yielded; was not made a bishop; was not provided for by Swift, but put upon the shelf; left his son (myself,) to pay the mortgage, with a long arrear of interest upon it; and all that my father received from him, to the value of a single farthing, as a favour, was that which may be read in the Dean's will. My father loved the Dean to an excess almost unparalleled; but I have often heard him say, that the Dean was the only enemy that, to his knowledge, he ever had in his life, with the exception of Delany. I know not whether I have clearly expressed myself about Walpole and my father; but I would sum it up with saying, that there was no particular friendship between Walpole and Mr. Deane Swift, and that their politics differed *toto cœlo.* The motive of the minister was not to serve my father, but to mortify the Dean; the Dean knew it, and sacrificed my father to his spleen. This is the truth of the matter. But my father would have done honour to Walpole's choice."

The ingenious editor of the Swiftiana mentions, that as Swift disliked his relations, (on account, as he alleged, of their degeneracy from the loyal faith of the vicar of Goodrich; see his Works, Vol. XIX. p. 201,) so they detested him, and distinguished him by the nickname of *Top of Kin.* Many of them had become rich, and were probably mortified by his avowed neglect of their claim to his notice as kinsmen.

Digitized by Google

ities, and the management of his household, which must otherwise have been abandoned to menials and interested persons.

The acquaintance of the Earl of Orrery, who endeavoured, by his assiduous attention, to recommend himself to Swift during the latter part of his life, was less disinterested. The character of that noble author is now pretty generally understood. Proud, cold, and unamiable, in private life, he could stoop, where it was necessary for the purpose of attaining the character which he chiefly affected, that of a man of genius; and Berkeley happily remarked, that his lordship would have been such, had he known how to set about it. As a scaffolding for his ambitious desire of literary distinction, Lord Orrery rested much upon his interest with the Dean. He courted him by encomiastic verses, but without the fancy and power of Delany; and, contrary to the bent of his nature, even vailed his dignity so far as to imitate the facetious trifles of Sheridan, without possessing either his humour or facility.* But these sacrifices were not without their object; and, in his celebrated Remarks upon Swift's Life and Writings, the noble author seems to have sought indemnification for the homage he had constrained himself to pay to Swift while alive, and for the coldness with which his court had, it is said, been in some instances received.† The

* See his Lordship's heavy attempt at literary frolic in the shape of a letter written backwards. Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 351. In truth, Lord Orrery, though he affected the character of the friend of Swift, had no conception of humour. He sneers with contemptuous gravity, at the Directions to Servants, and treats as "sour small-beer" the Dean's light effusions of fancy and frolic; but he expects his son to be extravagantly delighted with the account of Wood's procession, in which various persons express their resentment in the terms of their calling; as the cook, who threatens to *baste* him, —the tailor, to *sit in his skirts*, &c.

† The real cause of Lord Orrery's treatment of Swift originated in a letter that had been found unopened by Swift's executors among his papers. The letter was endorsed, "This will keep cold." Lord Orrery had also learned, that when he sent the paper-book to Swift on his birth-day, the Dean, on reading the words "Dear Swift," in the first line, exclaimed with great indignance at his familiarity— "Dear Swift? Dear Swift? Boy! Boy! Pshaw! Pshaw! What

Digitized by Google

work unquestionably displays some talent, and preserves much of Swift that might not otherwise have been known. But the severity with which the Dean's failings were censured and recorded, is not only inconsistent with the friendship and deference which Orrery affected during his life, but, in many cases, deviates into inaccuracy* and exaggeration, and exceeds even the privilege of attack which might have been permitted to a professed but liberal enemy. It is some apology, though but a poor one, for the dark shades with which Orrery drew the character of his departed friend, that he had never known Swift until the decline of life, marked, as it was, by the loss of those friends who rendered life supportable to him,—by the increase of infirmities and irritability,—and by the gradual declension of the powers of intellect.

A more sincere and disinterested friend of the Dean was the good-natured, light-hearted, and ingenious Sheridan. But of his society the Dean was in a great measure deprived. He had resigned his residence in Dublin about 1734, and retired to the free school at Cavan with a diminished income, but unbroken gaiety of heart and spirits. Mr. Sheridan has recorded an affecting circumstance, which happened while his father was on the point of removal. The Dean "happened to call in just at the time that the workmen were taking down the pictures and other furniture in the parlour; that parlour where for such a number of years he had passed so many happy hours. Struck with the sight, he burst into tears, and rushed into a dark closet, where he continued a quarter of an hour before he could compose himself. When it is considered that he

does the boy mean? *Friend? Friend? Sincere Friend?* Fool! Boy! Boy!"—Mrs. Whiteway, being present when these expressions were used, remarked that Lord Orrery's servant, who waited in the hall, might easily hear them. They were probably reported; and the slight which they indicate was not erased by the handsome letter which the Dean wrote to his lordship on the occasion. Swift's Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 75.

* Lord Orrery first broached the figment that Swift might be the natural son of Sir William Temple, which was morally impossible.

Digitized by Google

was at that time verging on seventy, an age in which the heart generally is callous, and almost dead to the fine affections, there cannot be a stronger confutation of the charge made against him of his want of feeling; as I believe the instances are very rare of persons at that time of life capable of being so much moved by such an incident."*

The Dean in the following year visited his friend in his new residence. The amusement of riddles and Anglo-latin verses was renewed, but the charm was lost. Mr. Sheridan describes Swift as having become moody, and prone to violent fits of passion, receiving with scorn the attentions offered him by the burgesses of Cavan, who came out in a body to meet him, and repaying them reluctantly with a niggard and sparing entertainment at the inn. Other instances occurred, at this unhappy period of his life, intimating the irritability of a temper which could no longer bear the slightest retort, even when seasoned by the wit which he used so much to admire. After two years residence at Cavan, Dr. Sheridan, with disappointed hopes and an impaired fortune, sold his school and returned to Dublin. He resided for a short time at the deanery; but Swift was incapable either of giving or receiving consolation, or even of respecting the feelings of the attached friend of so many years. It is painful to record that they parted on bad terms, and that Sheridan died soon afterwards, without any reconciliation having taken place.†

The Dean's solitary and unhappy situation was such as now exposed him to imposition, and even to insult. One Francis Wilson, a prebendary of his cathedral, who resided in the deanery, and had been named by Swift one of his executors, formed, it is said, a plan of

* Sheridan's Life of Swift.

† Mr. Sheridan blames Mrs. Whiteway as having inflamed the quarrel. Mr. Theophilus Swift has denied this charge, and produced more than one anecdote to show, that Mrs. Whiteway, on the contrary, acted as a mediator between the Dean and Dr. Sheridan, which the tone of their correspondence seems also to indicate. There is no occasion for entering minutely into the controversy.

Digitized by Google

availing himself of the weakness of the Dean's intellects, to get himself appointed sub-dean of St. Patrick's, and, after in vain attempting to intoxicate him, had recourse to measures of intimidation and personal violence. Wilson attempted to vindicate himself by an affidavit, in which he ascribes the disgraceful struggle, which certainly took place, to a fit of frenzy on the Dean's part.* But his account was not credited, more especially as he was supposed to have been guilty of acts of peculation while he was a guest at the deanery.† He was forbidden to return there, and died soon afterwards.

Mrs. Whiteway was Swift's chief guardian against such selfish and dangerous guests as this man. An altercation once took place between them, concerning some of those visitors, whom she knew to be worthless and low-minded, and observed to be gaining influence over the Dean. The dispute growing high, Mrs. Whiteway rose from her seat, and dropping an angry curtsey, said, "I'll leave you, sir, to your flatterers and sycophants;" and then left the house in anger, resolving not to return. For two days she kept her resolution; and in that time had more than a dozen visitors at her door, who enquired with great concern for her health, after the unhappy circumstance that had befallen her. The fact was, the Dean had gone round to his friends, and with a serious face deplored the misfortune that he himself had witnessed, that Mrs. Whiteway had suddenly been seized with a fit of madness, and had been taken home in a most distracted state of mind. When he thought the deception had sufficiently worked, he called, and making her a silent bow, sat down. Mr. Deane Swift was in the room; being at that time on a visit at Mrs. Whiteway's. The Dean conversed with him for about ten minutes, without interchanging a word or a look with Mrs. Whiteway. He then got up,

* Swift's Works, Vol. XIX. pp. 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, and note, pp. 258, 259, 260.

† The servants at the deanery told Mrs. Whiteway, that they observed Wilson usually brought with him an empty portmanteau, and carried it away filled with books.

Digitized by Google

looked kindly at Mrs. Whiteway, and turning to Mr. Swift, "*Half* this visit was to you, sir." In uttering the word *half*, he glanced his eye at Mrs. Whiteway, bowed to them both, and withdrew. Their cordiality was instantly renewed.

The last scene was now rapidly approaching, and the stage darkened ere the curtain fell. From 1736, downward, the Dean's fits of periodical giddiness and deafness had returned with violence; he could neither enjoy conversation, nor amuse himself with writing; and an obstinate resolution which he had formed not to wear glasses, prevented him from reading. The following dismal letter to Mrs. Whiteway, in 1740, is almost the last document which we possess of the celebrated Swift, as a rational and reflecting being. It awfully foretells the catastrophe which shortly after took place.

"I have been very miserable all night, and to-day extremely deaf and full of pain. I am so stupid and confounded, that I cannot express the mortification I am under both in body and mind. All I can say is, that I am not in torture; but I daily and hourly expect it. Pray let me know how your health is, and your family. I hardly understand one word I write. I am sure my days will be very few; few and miserable they must be.

I am, for those few days,
Yours entirely,
J. SWIFT.

If I do not blunder, it is Saturday,
July 26, 1740."

His understanding having totally failed soon after these melancholy expressions of grief and affection, his first state was that of violent and furious lunacy. His estate was put under the management of trustees, and his person confided to the care of Dr. Lyons, a respectable clergyman, curate to the Rev. Robert King, Prebendary of Dunlavin, one of Swift's executors. This gentleman discharged his melancholy task with great

Digitized by Google

fidelity, being much and gratefully attached to the object of his care.* From a state of outrageous frenzy,

* The most minute account of this melancholy period is given by Dr. Delany. "In the beginning of the year 1741, his understanding was so much impaired, and his passions so greatly increased, that he was utterly incapable of conversation. Strangers were not permitted to approach him, and his friends found it necessary to have guardians appointed of his person and estate. Early in the year 1742, his reason was wholly subverted, and his rage became absolute madness. The last person whom he knew was Mrs. Whiteway;† and the sight of her, when he knew her no longer, threw him into fits of rage so violent and dreadful, that she was forced to leave him; and the only act of kindness that remained in her power, was to call once or twice a week at the Deanery, enquire after his health, and see that proper care was taken of him. Sometimes she would steal a look at him when his back was towards her, but did not dare to venture into his sight. He would neither eat nor drink while the servants who brought him his provisions staid in the room. His meat which was served up ready cut, he would sometimes suffer to stand an hour upon the table before he would touch it; and at last he would eat it walking; for during this miserable state of his mind, it was his constant custom to walk ten hours a day.

"In October 1742, after this frenzy had continued several months, his left eye swelled to the size of an egg, and the lid appeared to be so much inflamed and discoloured, that the surgeon expected it would mortify; several large boils also broke out on his arms and his body. The extreme pain of this tumour kept him waking near a month, and during one week it was with difficulty that five persons kept him, by mere force, from tearing out his eyes. Just before the tumour perfectly subsided, and the pain left him, he knew Mrs. Whiteway, took her by the hand, and spoke to her with his former kindness: that day, and the following, he knew his physician and surgeon, and all his family, and appeared to have so far recovered his understanding and temper, that the surgeon was not without hopes he might once more enjoy society, and be amused with the company of his old friends. This hope, however, was but of short duration; for a few days afterwards he sunk into a state of total insensibility, slept much, and could not, without great difficulty, be prevailed on to walk across the room. This was the effect of another bodily disease, his brain being loaded with water. Mr. Stevens, an ingenious clergyman of his chapter, pronounced this to be the case during his illness, and upon opening his head it appeared that he was not mistaken; but though he often entreated the Dean's friends and physicians that his scull might be trepanned and the water discharged, no regard was paid to his opinion or advice.

"After the Dean had continued silent a whole year in this help-

† His first cousin. See a letter dated Nov. 8, 1735.—N.

Digitized by Google

aggravated by severe bodily suffering, the illustrious Dean of St. Patrick's sunk into the situation of a helpless changeling.* In the course of about three years,

less state of idiocy, his housekeeper went into his room on the 30th of November in the morning, telling him that it was his birthday, and that bonfires and illuminations were preparing to celebrate it as usual; to this he immediately replied—'It is all folly, they had better let it alone.'

"He would often attempt to speak his mind, but could not recollect words to express his meaning; upon which he would shrug up his shoulders, shake his head, and sigh heartily. Among all kinds of smells, none offended him so much as the snuff of a candle. It happened that a young girl, the daughter of his housekeeper's relation, blew out a candle in his chamber; at which he knit his brows, looked angry, and said, 'You are a little dirty slut!' He spoke no more of it; but seemed displeased with her the whole evening.

"Some other instances of short intervals of sensibility and reason, after his madness had ended in stupor, seem to prove that his disorder, whatever it was, had not destroyed, but only suspended the powers of his mind.

"He was sometimes visited by Mr. Deane Swift, a relation, and about Christmas, 1743, he seemed desirous to speak to him. Mr. Swift then told him he came to dine with him; and Mrs. Ridgeway, the housekeeper, immediately said, 'Won't you give Mr. Swift a glass of wine, sir?' To this he made no answer, but showed he understood the question, by shrugging up his shoulders, as he had been used to do, when he had a mind a friend should spend the evening with him, and which was as much as to say 'you will ruin me in wine.' Soon after he again endeavoured, with a good deal of pain, to find words; but at last, after many efforts, not being able, he fetched a deep sigh, and was afterwards silent. A few months after this, upon his housekeeper's removing a knife, as he was going to catch at it, he shrugged up his shoulders, and said, 'I am what I am;' and, in about six minutes, repeated the same words two or three times.

"In the year 1744, he now and then called his servant by his name, and once attempted to speak to him, but not being able to express his meaning, he showed signs of much uneasiness, and at last said, 'I am a fool.' Once afterwards, as his servant was taking away his watch, he said, 'Bring it here;' and when the same servant was breaking a hard large coal, he said, 'That is a stone, you blockhead.'

"From this time he was perfectly silent, till the latter end of October 1745; and then died without the least pang or convulsion, in the seventy-eighth year of his age."

* The curiosity of strangers sometimes led them to see this extraordinary man in this state of living death. The father of the late Lord Kinedder, one of the Editor's most intimate friends, was of the number. He was told that the servants privately took money

Digitized by Google

he is only known to have spoken once or twice. At length, when this awful moral lesson had subsisted from 1743, until the 19th October 1745, it pleased God to release the subject of these Memoirs from this calamitous situation. He died upon that day without a single pang, so gently, indeed, that his attendants were scarce aware of the moment of his dissolution.

It was then that the gratitude of the Irish showed itself in the full glow of national enthusiasm. The interval was forgotten, during which their great patriot had been dead to the world, and he was wept and mourned, as if he had been called away in the full career of his public services. Young and old of all ranks surrounded the house, to pay the last tribute of sorrow and of affection. Locks of his hair were so eagerly sought after, that Mr. Sheridan happily applies to the enthusiasm of the citizens of Dublin, the lines of Shakespeare,

> Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
> And dying mention it within their wills,
> Bequeathing it as a rich legacy
> Unto their issue.
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

The remains of Dean Swift were interred, agreeably to his directions, with privacy,* in the great aisle of

for gratifying the curiosity of strangers, but declined to have recourse to that mode of gratifying his curiosity. He saw the Dean by means of a clergyman, (Dr. Lyons, probably,) who was at that time totally unconscious of all that passed around him, a living wreck of humanity.

* It appears from the following animated expostulation, addressed by Mrs. Whiteway to one of the executors, that their purpose was to have interpreted the word privacy so strictly as to infer a sordid and unbecoming obscurity. It would appear that the remonstrances of his friend and relation were attended to. The original paper is amongst those belonging to Mr. Swift:—

Mrs. WHITEWAY to some one of Dr. SWIFT's Executors.
1745.

SIR,

THE indignation which the town have expressed at the manner of burying their Patriot, is a proof his memory is dear as his life was once so to them. I am told, and I wish my authority may not be true, that Dr. Swift is to be carried out of his back-

Digitized by Google

St. Patrick's Cathedral, where an inscription, composed by himself, records his exertions for liberty, and his detestation of oppression.

HIC DEPOSITUM EST CORPUS
JONATHAN SWIFT, S. T. P.
HUJUS ECCLESIÆ CATHEDRALIS
DECANI:
UBI SÆVA INDIGNATIO
ULTERIUS COR LACERARE NEQUIT.
ABI VIATOR,
ET IMITARE, SI POTERIS,
STRENUUM PRO VIRILI LIBERTATIS VINDICEM.
OBIIT ANNO (1745):
MENSIS (OCTOBRIS) DIE (19);
ÆTATIS ANNO (78).

door at one in the morning by four porters into the church, attended only by two clergymen, with the circumstance of the respect paid to them, of giving each a scarf. I know his desire was to be buried as privately as possible; but, were the same persons to be executors to a duke, and a man who had left but five pounds behind him, would the words be construed in the same literal sense? and I appeal to yourself, whether ever you knew a gentleman, whose corpse was not in danger of being arrested for debt, treated in such a manner—an executed criminal, to whom the law doth not allow Christian burial, could only be used thus, by some slight acquaintance. Surely to hang the room Dr. Swift lies in with black, to give him an hearse, and a few mourning coaches, would be judged a funeral sufficiently private for so great a man; and that he himself thought decency requisite at a funeral, may be known by what he did for his honest, trusty servant, Alexander M'Gee. If this expense be thought too much to be taken from the noble charity he hath bequeathed, I make the offer of doing it, and desire it may be taken out of my legacy, as the last respect I can pay to my great and worthy friend.

If this favour be denied me, I shall let whoever mentions this affair in my hearing, know the offer I have made.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

MARTHA WHITEWAY.

October 22, 1745, *ten in the morning.*

Digitized by Google

CONCLUSION.

Person, Habits, and Private Character of Swift—His Conversation—His Reading—Apparent Inconsistencies in his Character—His Charity—His Talents for Criticism—Character of the Dean as a Poet—As a Prose Author.

SWIFT was in person tall, strong, and well made, of a dark complexion, but with blue eyes, black and bushy eyebrows, nose somewhat acquiline, and features which remarkably expressed the stern, haughty, and dauntless turn of his mind. He was never known to laugh, and his smiles are happily characterized by the well-known lines of Shakespeare. Indeed, the whole description of Cassius might be applied to Swift:

> ——————— He reads much,
> He is a great observer, and he looks
> Quite through the deeds of men.—
> Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort,
> As if he mock'd himself, and scorn'd his spirit
> That could be moved to smile at any thing.

The features of the Dean have been preserved in several paintings, busts, and medals.* In youth, he was

* There is an excellent portrait of Dean Swift at the Deanery House, Dublin, painted by Bindon. A genius appears in the piece displaying a scroll, containing a Latin inscription, partly undecypherable, but which refers to the Dean's exertions in procuring for the church the grant of the first fruits and tenths. At the bottom of the canvass is the following inscription:—

EFFIGIEM HUJUS REV. ADMODUM VIRI JONATH. SWIFT, S. T. P. ECCLESIÆ CATH. S. PAT. DUB. DECANI. IN PERPETUUM HARUM ÆDIUM TOTIUS CLERI ET HUJUSCE PRÆCIPUE GENTIS DECUS, AMORIS ET OBSERVANTIÆ ERGO PINGI CURAVIT CAPITULUM SUUM.

PRÆSENTI TIBI MATUROS LARGIMUR HONORES,
NIL ORITURUM ALIAS, NIL ORTUM TALE FATENTES.

In the back distance, through the window, is seen in perspective the great western door of the cathedral of St. Patrick's, leading im-

Digitized by Google

reckoned handsome; Pope observed, that though his face had an expression of dulness, his eyes were very particular. They were as azure, he said, as the heavens, and had an unusual expression of acuteness. In old age, the Dean's countenance conveyed an expression which, though severe, was noble and impressive.

mediately to that aisle in which the illustrious patriot is interred. The tower, or steeple, is pre-eminently conspicuous, however minute this part of the drawing be. It is to be observed, that at the period the original painting was taken, the spire, which now completes that fine Gothic structure, had not been erected.

The frame is of black Irish oak, curiously and tastefully carved with a variety of emblematical figures, having at the bottom the arms of the Deanery and of Swift quartered in one scutcheon. The unfortunate taste of one of his successors caused this frame to be gilded. This picture should not be mentioned without recording the patriotic disinterestedness of Dean Cradoc, who, when a fire broke out at the Deanery-house, commanded those who assisted to leave their exertions to save his own property and books, until they had secured the picture of his renowned predecessor.

Another portrait, supposed to be one of the best likenesses in existence, and also painted by Bindon, is the property of Dr. Hill of Dublin. The expression of the features differ in some respects from the picture in the Deanery, being rather of a deep and melancholy cast, than of the stern, harsh, and imperative character.

There is a portrait of Dean Swift at Howth Castle. It is a full length, painted by Bindon. He is represented in the clerical costume. To the left of the figure is seen the Temple of Fame in the back ground; on the Dean's right appears the genius of Ireland, extending a laurel-wreath, as about to crown the patriot; in his left hand he holds forth a scroll, on which is written, "The fourth Drapier's Letter." At his feet, on the right of the picture, lies bound the famous patentee *Woods;* he is depicted in agony. On a scroll is written "Woods' patent."

A full-length painting of the Dean, in his clerical habit, is placed in the theatre, or examination-hall, of Trinity College, Dublin. The head and figure, with some variation of attitude, appear to be copied from the oil painting at the Deanery-house. He is here represented as standing between two pillars; in the space between, in the back-ground, is given a view of the steeple and spire of St. Patrick's.

In the museum of Trinity College, Dublin, there is a dark plaster bust, or cast, of Dean Swift. It is an impression taken from the mask, applied to the face after death. The expression of countenance is most unequivocally maniacal, and one side of the mouth (the left,) horribly contorted downwards, as if convulsed by pain. It is engraved for Mr. Barrett's Essay.

There is a marble bust of Dean Swift in the possession of Dr. Duke, Stephen's-green, Dublin.

Digitized by Google

He spoke in public with facility and impressive energy; and as his talents for ready reply were so well calculated for political debate, it must have increased the mortification of Queen Anne's ministers, that they found themselves unable to secure him a seat on the bench of Bishops. The government of Ireland dreaded his eloquence as much as his pen.

His manners in society were, in his better days, free, lively, and engaging, not devoid of peculiarities, but bending them so well to circumstances, that his company was universally courted. When age and infirmity had impaired the elasticity of his spirits and the equality of his temper, his conversation was still valued, not only on account of the extended and various acquaintance with life and manners, of which it displayed an inexhaustible fund, but also for the shrewd and satirical humour which seasoned his observations and anecdotes. This, according to Orrery, was the last of his powers which decayed; but the Dean himself was sensible that, as his memory failed, his stories were too often repeated. His powers of conversation and of humorous repartee were in his time regarded as unrivalled; but, like most who have assumed a despotic sway in conversation, he was sometimes silenced by unexpected resistance.* He was very fond of puns. Perhaps the application of the line of Virgil to the lady who threw down

* At an inn, seeing the cook-maid scraping a piece of mutton, he asked how many maggots she had got out of it? "Not so many as are in your head," answered the wench smartly. The Dean was angry, and complained to her mistress. On another occasion, he was silenced by a worthy citizen, Alderman Brown, who, having undergone his raillery in silence during the time of dinner, all of a sudden raised his head from the plate, on observing Swift take apple-sauce to the wing of a duck, and exclaimed, "Mr. Dean, you eat your duck like a goose." At another time, he asked Kenny, a Carmelite priest, whom he met at Mrs. Whiteway's, "Why the Catholic church used pictures and images, when the church of England did not?"—"Because," answered the priest readily, "we are old housekeepers, and you are new beginners." Swift was so surprised and incensed that he left the room, and would not stay dinner, though he had come to Mrs. Whiteway's with that intention. But these instances of irritability occurred during the latter years of his life, when he could not endure contradiction.

Digitized by Google

with her mantua a Cremona fiddle, is the best ever was made :—

Mantua, væ miseræ nimium vicina Cremonæ !

The comfort which he gave an elderly gentleman who had lost his spectacles, was more grotesque. "If this rain continues all night, you will certainly recover them in the morning betimes:.

Nocte pluit tota—redeunt spectacula mane.

His pre-eminence in more legitimate wit is asserted by many anecdotes. A man of distinction not remarkable for regularity in his private concerns, chose for his motto, *Eques haud male notus.* "Better known than trusted" was the Dean's translation, when some one related the circumstance.

Swift had an odd humour of making extempore proverbs. Observing that a gentleman, in whose garden he walked with some friends, seemed to have no intention to request them to eat any of the fruit, Swift observed, "It was a saying of his dear grandmother,

Always pull a peach
When it is within your reach;"

and helping himself accordingly, his example was followed by the whole company. At another time, he framed an "old saying and true" for the benefit of a person who had fallen from his horse into the mire :—

The more dirt,
The less hurt.

The man rose much consoled; but as he was a collector of proverbs himself, he wondered he had never before heard that used by the Dean upon the occasion. He threw some useful rules into rhyming adages;* and

* Sheridan quotes two of them. One of them was a direction to those who ride together through the water:

When through the water you do ride,
Keep very close, or very wide.

Another relating to the decanting of wine:

First rack slow, and then rack quick,
Then rack slow till you come to the thick.

Digitized by Google

indeed, as his Journal to Stella proves, had a facility in putting rhymes together on any trifling occasion, which must have added considerably to the flow and facility of his poetical compositions.

In his personal habits he was cleanly, even to scrupulousness. At one period of his life he was said to lie in bed till eleven o'clock, and think of wit for the day;* but latterly he was an early riser. Swift was fond of exercise, and particularly of walking. And although modern pedestrians may smile at his proposing to journey to Chester, by walking ten miles a day; yet he is said to have taken this exercise too violently, and to a degree prejudicial to his health. He was also a tolerable horseman, fond of riding, and a judge of the noble animal, which he chose to celebrate, as the emblem of moral merit, under the name of Houyhnhnm. Exercise he pressed on his friends, particularly upon Stella and Vanessa, as a sort of duty; and scarce any of his letters conclude without allusion to it; especially as relating to the preservation of his own health, which his constitutional fits of deafness and giddiness rendered very precarious. His habit of body in other respects appears to have been indifferent, with a tendency to scrofula, which, perhaps, hastened his mental disorder.† But the immediate cause was the pressure of water

* Spence's Anecdotes, Singer's Edit. p. 66.

† During his residence at Cavan, he was tormented with an ulcerous shin, often mentioned in his letters; and in his journal there is a minute, and rather disgusting account of an eruption upon his shoulder. He sent for a surgeon belonging to the barracks, when at Cavan, to dress his wound. The young man entered with fear and trembling, for all men stood in awe of the Dean. "Look ye, sir," said Swift, raising his leg from the stool on which it was extended, "my shin is very badly hurt; I have sent for you, and if you can cure it, by ——— I'll advertise you. Here's five guineas for you, and you need look for no more; so cure me as fast as you can." The young man succeeded; and the Dean, who liked both his skill and his modesty, was kind to him, often asked him to dinner, and when the cure was completed, made him a compliment of five guineas more. In a letter to Mrs. Whiteway he says, the shin cost him but three guineas; the rest he probably set down to benevolence.

Digitized by Google

upon the head, as appeared from the dissection after death.*

Of his learning we have already spoken; it seems to have been both extensive and useful, but not profoundly scholastic. Of modern languages, he spoke and wrote French with facility, and understood Italian. His Latin verses indicate an imperfect knowledge of prosody, and no great command of the language in which they are written. The poem called Rupes Carberiæ, has, in particular, been severely criticised. It is seldom that Swift alludes to English literature; yet it is evident he had perused with attention those classics to which his name is now added. How carefully he had read Milton appears from his annotations on the Paradise Lost, for the benefit of Stella. Chaucer appears also to have been his favourite, for I observe among his papers a memorandum of the oaths used in the Canterbury Tales, classed with the personages by whom they are used. It appears from a note upon Mr. Todd's edition of Milton, that Swift was a peruser of the ancient romances of chivalry.† But he never mentions the romances and plays of the period in which he lived, without expressing the most emphatic con-

* Dr. King says, that about three years before his final decay, he observed, he was affected by the wine which he drank after dinner, and that next day, on his complaining of his health, he took the liberty to tell him he was afraid he had drank too much wine. He was startled, and replied, that he always looked on himself as a very temperate man, and never exceeded the quantity his physician prescribed. "Now his physician," continues King, "never drank less than two bottles of claret after dinner." But it must be remembered that King himself was a strict water-drinker.—*King's Anecdotes of his Own Times*, p. 16.

† Swift's Works, Vol. II. p. 157.

"Open fly
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder."

Mr. Todd, on Mr. Walker's authority, quotes a note of Swift on this passage, from Don Belianis, part ii. ch. 19. "*Open flew* the brazen folding *doors, grating harsh thunder* on their turning hinges." This remark does not appear in the editor's copy of Swift's notes on Milton, mentioned page 40, note, neither do the words occur in the stall-copy of Don Belianis.

Digitized by Google

tempt. To the drama, particularly, he was so indifferent, that he never once alludes to the writings of Shakespeare, nor, wonderful to be told, does he appear to have possessed a copy of his works. After noticing this, it will be scarce held remarkable, that the catalogue of his library only contains the works of three dramatic authors, Ben Jonson, Wycherley, and Rowe, the two last being presentation copies from the authors, in 1700 and 1702. History and classical authors formed the Dean's favourite studies, and, during the decay of his faculties, his reading was almost entirely confined to Clarendon.

Swift loved the country, like most men of genius, but rather practised rural occupations than rural sports. At Quilca, Gaulstown, and Market-Hill, he delighted in acting as a sort of overseer or bailiff to those employed in improving the property of his friends, and he dwells fondly in his journal on his plantations and canal at Laracor.

It does not appear from any part of his works, unless, perhaps, the Latin verses on the rocks of Carbery,* that he was an admirer of the beautiful or romantic in landscape; but he was a curious, though not a scientific, observer of any singular natural phenomena which came under his attention.†

The humour of stubborn independence, which influenced the Dean's whole character, stamps it at first examination with a whole chain of paradoxes. A devout believer in the truths of Christianity, a constant

* He lay down on his breast to view the precipice, and became so giddy (owing probably to his constitutional vertigo) that he durst not rise; and his two servants were forced to drag him back by the heels to some distance from the brink.

† The following meteorological observations are copied from the Dean's Bible, which bears his name, "Jonathan Swift," and the date, "Feb. 14, 1697." "Maii die 3tio, 1698, nix multa decidit, ab hora vesper: 6ta ad 9m fere cedens, ac non solum nocte, verum etiam ad crastini diei partem meridianam, conferta humi jacuit, arboribusque spississime inhærebat: hoc vidi prope vicum dict. Farnham in comitatu de Surrey.

"Jan. 27, 1698-9.

"Mense Martio, A. D. 1698-9, sævit pestis inter equos, non solum per insulas Britannicas, sed fere omnino Europam grassata."

Digitized by Google

observer of the rules of religion, and zealous even to slaying in the cause of the Church of England, Swift assumed an occasional levity of writing, speaking, and acting, which caused his being branded as an infidel, a contemner of public ordinances, and a scoffer of church-discipline.* Nor was this all. A zealous friend of liberty in temporal politics, he acted during his whole life with the Tory party,—disliking Ireland† even to virulent prejudice, he was the first and most effectual vindicator of her rights and liberties; and, charitable and benevolent to the extreme limits of a moderate revenue, he lay under the reproach of avarice and parsimony. An admirer of paradoxes, like Dr. Fuller, might have found points in his history as well as opinions, capable of being placed in strong contrast. The first writer of his age was disgraced at college; the principal supporter of Queen Anne's last administration, whose interest had made many a prelate, was himself unable to attain that dignity; and he who in his writings exhibited a tone of the most bitter misanthropy, was in active life a steady patriot, a warm friend, and a bountiful patron. He had also this remarkable fate as a political writer, that, although his publishers were in four instances subjected to arrest and examination,—although large rewards were twice offered for discovery of the author of works generally and truly ascribed to him,—yet he never personally felt the grasp of power;

* "I hate Lent," he says, in his Journal to Stella, "I hate furmity and sour faces." Swift's Works, Vol. II. p. 513. Many stories were, however, imputed to him without any ground.

† The Dean disliked Ireland as a residence, not in itself, or with reference to the natural qualities of its inhabitants, but on account of its being subjected to a sort of subaltern oppression, equally degrading to the characters of those who inflicted and those who endured it. I have, therefore, rejected from this edition, a lampoon entitled, "Some account of the Irish, by the late J. S. D. D. D. S. P. 8vo. London, 1753." This libel, which charges the Irish with all sorts of vices, and even with cowardice, has some wit; but it is the wit of Ward, or Tom Brown, rather than of Jonathan Swift, Doctor of Divinity, and Dean of St. Patrick's, whose name and titles are intimated by the initials on the title-page.

Digitized by Google

For not a Judas could be found,
To sell him for three hundred pound.*

Many of these apparent paradoxes arose from Swift's stern and unbending pride of temper, which rather contemned and avoided public applause, than studied to present his character under favourable colours to the general eye. Even his politeness assumed often a singular turn of cynicism, and much of his conduct in life reminds us of his favourite style of composition, that IRONY

Which he was born to introduce,
Refined it first, and showed its use.

From the same cause he often exhibited, in his first address, a sternness and bluntness of demeanour, which, detached from the mode in which he well knew how to repair the pain he had given, was harsh to his inferiors, and uncivil to those of higher rank. An anecdote which, though told by Mrs. Pilkington, is well attested, bears, that the last time he was in London he went to dine with the Earl of Burlington, who was then but newly married. The Earl being willing, it is supposed, to have some diversion, did not introduce him to his lady, nor mention his name. After dinner, said the Dean, "Lady Burlington, I hear you can sing; sing me a song." The lady looked on this unceremonious manner of asking a favour with distaste, and positively refused. He said, "She should sing, or he would make her. Why, madam, I suppose you take me for one of your poor English hedge-parsons; sing when I bid you." As the earl did nothing but laugh at this freedom, the lady was so vexed, that she burst into tears, and retired. His first compliment to her when he saw her again, was, "Pray, madam, are you as proud and as ill-natured now, as when I saw you last?" To which she answered, with great humour, "No, Mr. Dean; I'll

* In allusion to this circumstance, he once said, he was three times near being hanged, and that people supposed he could bring in the Pretender in his hand, and place on him the crown.

Digitized by Google

sing for you, if you please." From which time he conceived great esteem for her. The Dean received with complaisance such praise as was delicately administered; but it belonged to his character to repel whatever was extravagant or coarse. When a friend professed to love Swift better than all his friends and relations, he said, "The man is a fool." And when Pope talked to him of a lady who admired him above all things, he replied, "Then I despise her heartily."* In fact, he seems rather to have expected his friends to gratify him by implicit compliance with his humour, however whimsical, than by any verbal flattery, disguising perhaps from himself, that such servile compliance was the grossest sort of practical adulation.

Much attached to his own profession, he had a strong prejudice against the military† and the law. Yet it is probable he would have been a brave and distinguished soldier, and certain that he must have risen high at the bar, to which his talents were peculiarly adapted. His dislike to soldiers was probably heightened by his indifferent opinion of Marlborough, and other general officers, who were zealous against the peace of Utrecht; and the disinclination of courts of law to countenance

* Singer's Spence's Anecdotes, p. 256.

† His imaginary captain of dragoons, in the poem on Hamilton's Bawn, holds precisely the same language with the real soldier commemorated in the Essay on Modern Education: "D—n me, doctor, say what you will, the army is the only school for gentlemen. Do you think my Lord Marlborough beat the French with Greek and Latin? D—n me, a scholar when he comes into good company, what is he but an ass? D—n me, I would be glad, by G—d, to see any of your scholars, with his nouns and his verbs, and his philosophy and trigonometry, what a figure he would make at a siege, or blockade, or rencountering—D—n me," &c. Swift's Works, Vol. IX. pp. 164, 165. Yet there were times when the Dean envied the military prerogative of using personal castigation. Seeing a drayman abusing his overloaded horse, he attacked the fellow with his whip, and gave him several blows, exclaiming at each stroke, "O that I were a captain of horse!" On another occasion, he tells a squire with whom he had a violent dispute, "he heartily wished, to make him show his humility, his quarrel had rather been with a captain of dragoons than with the Dean of St. Patrick's." Perhaps the Dean on both occasions recollected King William's proposal to promote him in the army.

Digitized by Google

the tithe of agistment, seems greatly to have aggravated his dislike to that profession.*

* In 1733, when Swift executed the revision of Gulliver's Travels, mentioned p. 228, note, he made the most bitter additions to the passages affecting the law and its professors. About the same time, he indulged his humour with a most extraordinary mock trial, in ridicule of the assizes then about to be held in the county of Meath. The scene was Ardsalla, the house of Mr. Ludlow, where the Jacksons, Grattans, Mr. Stopford, and other favourites of the Dean, were assembled. Sheridan, it seems, had been guilty of a petty delinquency in his chamber. The rest shall be abridged from the narrative of Mr. Theophilus Swift. "A tribunal is erected, and all things prepared in due and regular form. A plain kitchen table is turned with its top downwards, and into this dock Sheridan is put wigless and bare-headed; while Swift himself mounts the seat of justice, with his own wig frizzed, and bushed into a full bottom, and set inverted on his head. A servant maid's scarlet cloak is flung over his shoulders, to represent the robes of a Judge, and Aaron's band is converted into that of a Chief Justice. The grand jury are sworn, and the bill found; the petty jury sworn in their turn, and the prisoner put on his trial. The crier commands silence, and the lawyers are ranged. The utmost gravity and decorum prevail; and the only smile that passed on the occasion, arose from the ludicrous circumstance of Mr. Stopford, who, being fee'd for the crown, declared he could not do his duty as a true lawyer, unless he should be fee'd on both sides. A second fee, therefore, is given him in open court, on behalf of the prisoner; and he told my mother, he actually received by the double fee eighteen shillings. He is said to have conducted himself with wonderful humour and address through the whole of the trial. The Jacksons and Grattans had likewise their respective stations in the cause. Most of the servants are examined, and in spite of prayers and entreaties, Mrs. Ludlow herself; who is made to swear on the vessel alleged to have suffered pollution. Their verdict, as might be expected, is that of guilty; and Swift, with all the solemnity of justice, pronounces sentence of death on the trembling Sheridan, awfully concluding with, 'The Lord have mercy on your soul!' A rope is produced; Sheridan sees he shall be hanged *pro forma;* out of the dock he springs, and flies up stairs, the whole court in full cry after him. But fear having added wings to his feet, he had sufficient time to bolt his chamber-door, which he barricadoed as well as he could, with what furniture was in the room. Here for two hours he remained besieged; at length he capitulated, on a solemn assurance that he should not be hanged.

"In a day or two the Judges arrive; and, hearing the contempt that Swift had put upon them, send an express with an account of it to the lord-lieutenant, who very wisely laughed at the frolic. Not finding the redress they expected, they make a formal complaint to the bishops, who had nearly resolved to take up the matter seriously; but one more prudent than the rest recommended that the whole should be hushed up."

Digitized by Google

The Dean's temper, while he was its master, was strictly economical, but the reverse of avaricious. He gave to the uttermost of his power, but he suffered no advantage to be taken of him. This was for a time an obstacle to his popularity; for the vulgar are always inclined to praise an easy and indifferent temper, in preference even to liberality, when meted forth by the severe test of merit. But the Dean's real and discriminating charity aimed at a better reward than popular applause. Even in his latter years, when habits of economy had assumed the appearance of parsimony, they could not overcome his principle of benevolence. When he was extremely ill, he heard of the ruin of Mr. Ellis a cabinet-maker, an industrious young man, newly married, by a casual fire. The Dean instantly gave Mrs. Whiteway twenty pounds for the use of the young couple, charging his friend to conceal the quarter from which the relief had been administered.

It is a well-known fact, that Swift, with the first five hundred pounds which he could call his own, instituted a fund for granting small loans to such industrious artizans and tradesmen as could find security for repaying the money by small weekly instalments; but insisting upon punctuality in these repayments, without which the fund must soon have been exhausted. Dr. Johnson, no friend to Swift's fame, has represented this circumstance in an unfavourable view, as if he "employed the catchpoll under the appearance of charity." Yet, no one knew better than Dr. Johnson the uselessness of vague and indiscriminate bounty, or the advantage of awakening the needy to habits of regular economy. It is more honourably reported, that many families of considerable respectability in Dublin owed the rise of their prosperity to assistance from this small fund; nor can it be doubted, that the practice of regularly saving a portion of weekly income, to repay the assistance thus afforded them, had more influence on their future fortune, than might have been derived from double the sum conferred as an eleemosynary gift.*

* Of course, between the humour of the Dean and that of the in-

Digitized by Google

The Dean's views extended beyond the immediate relief of the poor, though he always carried about him a certain sum in different kinds of coin to be distributed to deserving objects. He chiefly laboured to place the mode of providing for them upon some permanent footing, which should at once render imposition difficult, and secure relief to the necessitous. On this subject he wrote several Tracts. (See his Works, Vol. VII. p. 382, *et seq.*) He also exercised a kind of police among the poor women who maintained themselves by selling flowers, fruit, and such articles of petty traffic. He had nicknames for many of them, according to their persons and occupations, as Flora, Cancerina, Stumpa-nympha, and so forth. It is said he was once interrupted in his office of censor of these petty dealers, by one of them who affected to mistake him for Higgins, a bustling, pragmatical clergyman of the time, who had made himself remarkable by the vehemence of his high-church politics. Swift liked the mistake so ill, that he was observed afterwards to avoid the street in which this woman kept her booth. In general, however, he neither met reply nor resistance, and as his authority was always exercised for the benefit of the public, so it was usually mingled with bounty towards his subjects.*

ferior Irish, some odd anecdotes occurred in the management of this fund. One old woman is said positively to have refused payment, because, as she said, the money had not luck with her since she had dealt with the church; and she became so vociferous in her complaints, that the Dean gave up his claim, fearing, as he said, she would meet him with an action of damages for having lent her the money that brought so many misfortunes with it. A cobbler who had been punctual in his first payment of a small instalment, had a tankard of ale by the Dean's orders. At his second payment, he requested the same refreshment, upon which the Dean, in a rage, ordered him to depart and let him see him no more; with which injunction the man punctually complied, glad no doubt to pay his debt so easily. Upon another occasion, it is said, that a person who wished to borrow a small sum of money, being asked by Swift whom he proposed as security? "I have none to offer," said the poor man, "excepting my faith in my Redeemer." Swift accepted the security, made the entry accordingly with all formality, and declared, that none of his debtors was more punctual than this man.

* He was every where received by the common people with the most profound respect, and used to say they should subscribe forty

Digitized by Google

The exertions of his own life bear witness to the Dean's love of his country, and regard for literature; and one of his last public acts exhibited the interest which he took in the prosperity of the University of Dublin.* These sentiments formed the basis on which he founded his friendships; for in his better days every individual whom he favoured was recommended either by learning or patriotism. And if, in some latter instances, his regard was less worthily conferred, it was when his situation exposed him to have the affectation of these qualities passed upon him for the reality. The steadiness of his friendship, and his readiness to discharge the duties which it imposed, at every risk of loss or danger to himself, has been already commemorated. His prejudices and antipathies were often too rashly adopted, and grounded in general upon reasons of political aversion. But Swift's mind was open to conviction, and, in most instances, when the ardour of controversy had subsided, he renewed the friendships it had broken off, or has spoken with candour and generosity of the objects of his satire. In two cases, however, he seems to have been implacable. His resentment outlived the faculties and the life of Marlborough, and attended his funeral with a satirical epitaph, which, however witty, dishonoured the writer more than the hero. Nor was he able to forbear a sarcasm against Steele, even in the Rhapsody on Poetry, when death ought to have silenced resentment. In his latter and more evil days, he classed

shillings a-year to keep him in hats, so numerous were the bows which he received and regularly returned. Upon one occasion he made a ludicrous experiment on the public belief in his authority. A number of people having assembled round the deanery to see an eclipse, Swift became tired of their noise, and commanded the crier to make proclamation that the eclipse was put off by command of the Dean of St. Patrick's. This extraordinary annunciation was received with great gravity, and was the means of dispersing the assembled star-gazers.

* From the London and Dublin Magazine for March 1735, p. 250. —"Last Thursday and yesterday, his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, and the Lord Bishop of Clogher, met at our university as visitors, to examine into the conduct of the fellows, and the abuses of the college. The Rev. Dr. Swift, D. S. P. D. was present, and spoke against some corruptions and abuses."

Digitized by Google

his friends into Ungrateful—Grateful—Indifferent—and Doubtful. We give the arrangement in a note, only observing it seems to have been made in a moment of spleen and suspicion; and that the Dean retained for many of these whom he has stigmatized as *ungrateful* a sincere value, inconsistent with their meriting that odious character.*

The same liberality distinguished him respecting criticism, whether he received it from others, or communicated his own remarks for their benefit. At Addison's suggestion, (as we have already stated,) in the short poem of Baucis and Philemon, he struck out forty verses, added forty verses, and altered the same number. On another occasion, he puts a pamphlet into the hands of a clergyman belonging to his chapter, for the benefit of his remarks. The critic suggested two alterations, which he instantly adopted. When the work appeared, he became sensible that the passages were altered for the worse, and expressed to the Dean his regret that the

* LIST OF FRIENDS,

Ungrateful—Grateful—Indifferent—and Doubtful.

Archbishop of Dublin (Dr. King), ... *u.*
Mr. Read, ... *d. g.*
Captain Bernege, . . . *g.*
Mr. Harrison, . . . *d. g.*
Mr. Fiddes, ... *i.*
L. Pr. (Lord Primate Marsh), ... *g.*
Mr. Warburton, (curate at Laracor,) . . . . *i.*
Mr. Walls, ... *u.*
Humphrey May, . . . *u.* at last, . *g.*
Dean of Down, Pratt, . *u.*
Mr. Berkeley, . . . *u.*
Mr. Steele, ... *u.*
Mr. Forbes, ... *u.*
Mr. Barber, ... *u.*
Mr. Tooke, ... *g.*
M– M– (Mrs. Manley,) . *g.*
Dr. Sacheverell, . . *i.*
Mr. Trapp, ... *i.*
Mr. Smyth, ... *i.*
Dr. St– (Bishop Sterne,) . *u.*
Mr. Stratford, . . . *i.*
Mr. Ford, ... *g.*
Mr. Pope, ... *g.*
Mr. Gay, ... *g.*
Dr. Parnell, . . . *u. d.*
Mr. Manley, (the Post-Master,) . . . . *u.*
Dr. Raymond, . . . *u.*
Mr. Robert Pooley, . *d.*
Mr. Higgins, . . . *u.*
John Grattan, . . . *g.*
Robert Grattan, . . . *g.*
Dr. Delany, . *i.* partly *g.*
Mr. Lightburn, . . *u.*
Charles Grattan, . . *g.*
Mr. Curtis, ... *g.*
Mr. Corbert, . . . *i.*
Mr. Nisbit, . . . *u.*
Mr. James Stopford, . *g.*
Dr. Sheridan, . . . *g.*
Queen C——, . . . *u.*
Mr. Wood, ... *g.*
Sir ——, ... *u.*
Mrs. Barber, . . . *g.*

Digitized by Google

alteration should have been suggested, and his surprise that he had acquiesced in them. "Sir," said Swift, "I considered that the passages were of no great consequence, and I made the alterations you desired without hesitation, lest, had I stood up in their defence, you might have imputed it to the vanity of an author unwilling to hear of his errors; and by this ready compliance, I hoped you would, at all times hereafter, be the more free in your remarks."

The same criticism to which he himself so readily deferred, he was willing to extend for the benefit of his friends, or of any young man of promising talent; and his friend Tickell has justly characterized him in this capacity:—

> "He too, from whom attentive Oxford draws
> Rules for just thinking, and poetic laws,
> To growing bards his learned aid shall lend,
> The strictest critic, and the kindest friend."

Of these criticisms, there are many specimens in his correspondence, in which his chastity of taste, and correctness of poetical ear, are eminently displayed. It sometimes happened, however, that when teazed for an opinion by those upon whom criticism would have been thrown away, he was unable to repress the causticity of his disposition. To one poet he returned his manuscript carefully folded up; assuring the author that he had gone through it with care, and struck out at least half the faults. The poor bard, impatient to profit by Swift's remarks, stopped under a gateway in his road homeward, and, opening the packet, discovered, to his infinite mortification, that the Dean had carefully blotted out every second line in his poem. With this whimsical expression of satirical humour, his conduct in the case of young Mr. Fitzherbert may be advantageously contrasted. This youth, expelled from his father's house by hard usage, applied to the Dean, as the general patron of the oppressed against public or domestic tyranny. He sent him some verses, with which Swift was pleased. The Dean not only wrote a most admirable letter* of

* Dated 19th March 1734–5. See his Works, Vol. XVIII. p. 285.

Digitized by Google

mingled intercession and remonstrance, but supplied the young man with money for relief of his immediate wants. He then waited upon the obdurate father, rebuked him for delaying to answer his letter, and extorted his consent that the young man should be sent to prosecute his medical studies at Leyden, with a suitable allowance.

As an AUTHOR, there are three peculiarities remarkable in the character of Swift. The first of these has been rarely conceded to an author, at least by his contemporaries. It is the distinguished attribute of ORIGINALITY, and it cannot be refused to Swift by the most severe critic. Even Johnson has allowed that perhaps no author can be found who has borrowed so little, or has so well maintained his claim to be considered as original. There was indeed nothing written before his time which could serve for his model, and the few hints which he has adopted from other authors bear no more resemblance to his compositions than the green flax to the cable which is formed from it.

The second peculiarity, which has indeed been already noticed, is his total indifference to literary fame. Swift executed his various and numerous works as a carpenter forms wedges, mallets, or other implements of his art, not with the purpose of distinguishing himself by the workmanship bestowed on the tools themselves, but solely in order to render them fit for accomplishing a certain purpose, beyond which they were of no value in his eyes. He is often anxious about the success of his argument, and angrily jealous of those who debate the principles and the purpose for which he assumes the pen, but he evinces, on all occasions, an unaffected indifference for the fate of his writings, providing the end of their publication was answered. The careless mode in which Swift suffered his works to get to the public, his refusing them the credit of his name, and his renouncing all connexion with the profits of literature,* indicate his disdain of the character of a professional author.

* In a letter to Pulteney, 12th May 1735, the Dean says, "I never got a farthing for any thing I writ except once, about eight years ago, and that by Mr. Pope's prudent management for me."

Digitized by Google

The third distinguishing mark of Swift's literary character is, that, with the exception of history, (for his fugitive attempts in Pindaric and Latin verse are too unimportant to be noticed,) he has never attempted any style of composition in which he has not obtained a distinguished pitch of excellence. We may often think the immediate mode of exercising his talents trifling, and sometimes coarse and offensive; but his Anglo-latin verses, his riddles, his indelicate descriptions, and his violent political satires, are in their various departments as excellent as the subjects admitted, and only leave us room occasionally to regret that so much talent was not uniformly employed upon nobler topics.

As a poet, Swift's post is pre-eminent in the sort of poetry which he cultivated. He never attempted any species of composition, in which either the sublime or the pathetic were required of him. But in every department of poetry where wit is necessary, he displayed, as the subject chanced to require, either the blasting lightning of satire, or the lambent and meteor-like coruscations of frolicsome humour. His powers of versification are admirably adapted to his favourite subjects. Rhyme, which is a handcuff to an inferior poet, he who is master of his art wears as a bracelet. Swift was of the latter description; his lines fall as easily into the best grammatical arrangement, and the most simple and forcible expression, as if he had been writing in prose. The numbers and the coincidence of rhymes, always correct and natural, though often unexpected, distinguish the current of his poetical composition, which exhibits, otherwise, no mark of the difficulty with which these graces are attained. In respect of matter, Swift seldom elevates his tone above a satirical diatribe, a moral lesson, or a poem on manners; but the former are unrivalled in severity, and the latter in

This probably alludes to Gulliver's Travels, for which Pope certainly obtained from the bookseller 300*l*. There may, however, be some question, whether this sum was not left at Pope's disposal as well as that which he got for the Miscellanies, and which Swift abandoned to him.

Digitized by Google

ease. Sometimes, however, the intensity of his satire gives to his poetry a character of emphatic violence, which borders upon grandeur. This is peculiarly distinguishable in the Rhapsody on Poetry, which, according to Dr. King, he accounted his best satire, and surely with great justice. Yet this grandeur is founded, not on sublimity either of conception or expression, but upon the energy of both; and indicates rather ardour of temper, than power of imagination. *Facit indignatio versus.* The elevation of tone arises from the strong mood of passion rather than from poetical fancy. When Dryden told Swift he would never be a poet, he only had reference to the Pindaric Odes, where power of imagination was necessary for success. In the walk of satire and familiar poetry, wit, and knowledge of mankind, joined to facility of expression, are the principal requisites for excellence, and in these Swift shines unrivalled. Cadenus and Vanessa may be considered as Swift's *chef-d'oeuvre* in that class of poems which is not professedly satirical. It is a poem on manners; and, like one of Marmontel's Contes Moraux, traces the progress and involutions of a passion, existing between two persons in modern society, contrasted strongly in age, manners, and situation. Yet even here the satirical vein of Swift has predominated. We look in vain for depth of feeling or tenderness of sentiment; although, had such existed in the poet's mind, the circumstances must have called it forth. The mythological fable, which conveys the compliments paid to Vanessa, is as cold as that addressed to Ardelia or to Miss Floyd. It is, in short, a kind of poetry which neither affects sublimity nor pathos, but in which the graceful facility of the poet unites with the acute observation of the observer of human nature, to commemorate the singular contest between Cadenus and Vanessa, as an extraordinary chapter in the history of the mind.

The Dean's promptitude in composition was equal to his smoothness and felicity of expression. At Mr. Gore's, in the county of Cavan, he heard the lively air called the Feast of O'Rourke, and, obtaining a literal

Digitized by Google

translation of the original Irish song from the author, Mr. Macgowran, executed with surprising rapidity the spirited translation which is found in his works.*

Of the general style of Swift's poems, Dr. Johnson has said, in language not to be amended—"They are often humorous, almost always light, and have the qualities which recommend such compositions, easiness and gaiety. They are, for the most part, what their author intended. The diction is correct, the numbers are smooth, and the rhymes exact. There seldom occurs a hard-laboured expression, or a redundant epithet; all his verses exemplify his own definition of a good style—they consist of 'proper words in proper places.'"

As an historian Swift is entitled to little notice. The History of England is an abridgement, written evidently in imitation of Paterculus, but without those advantages in point of information which render the Latin author valuable. The Dean abandoned his task, because, as he said, with a sort of smile, to Mr. Deane Swift, "I have found them all such a pack of rascals, I would have no more to say to them." His account of the Four Last Years of Queen Anne has little pretensions to the name of history; it is written with the feelings and prejudices of a party writer, and does not deserve to be separated from the Examiners, and other political tracts, of which Swift was the author. The tendency and purpose of these various publications, as well as of the Drapier's Letters, have already been illustrated.

But although his political treatises raised his fame when published, and are still read as excellent models of that species of composition, it is to his Tale of a Tub, to the Battle of the Books, to his moral romance of Gulliver, and to his smaller, but not less exquisite satires upon men and manners, that Swift owes the extent and permanency of his popularity as an English classic of the first rank. In reference to these

* Vol. XIV. p. 141. The Dean has omitted the last six verses. Perhaps the author himself chose to suppress them, as reflecting upon the Catholic clergy.

Digitized by Google

works, Cardinal Polignac, to whom Swift was well known, used the remarkable expression, *Qu'il avoit l'esprit créateur.* He possessed, indeed, in the highest perfection, the wonderful power of so embodying and imaging forth "the shadowy tribes of mind," that the fiction of the imagination is received by the reader as if it were truth. Undoubtedly the same keen and powerful intellect, which could sound all the depths and shallows of active life, had stored his mind with facts drawn from his own acute observation, and thus supplied with materials the creative talent which he possessed; for although the knowledge of the human mind may be, in a certain extent, intuitive, and subsist without extended acquaintance with the living world, yet that acquaintance with manners, equally remarkable in Swift's productions, could only be acquired from intimate familiarity with the actual business of the world.

In fiction he possessed, in the most extensive degree, the art of verisimilitude;—the power, as we observed in the case of Gulliver's Travels, of adopting and sustaining a fictitious character, under every peculiarity of place and circumstance. A considerable part of this secret rests upon minuteness of narrative. Small and detached facts form the foreground of a narrative when told by an eye-witness. They are the subjects which immediately press upon his attention, and have, with respect to him as an individual, an importance, which they are far from bearing to the general scene in which he is engaged; just as a musket-shot, passing near the head of a soldier, makes a deeper impression on his mind, than all the heavy ordnance which has been discharged throughout the engagement. But to a distant spectator all these minute incidents are lost and blended in the general current of events; and it requires the discrimination of Swift, or of De Foe, to select, in a fictitious narrative, such an enumeration of minute incidents as might strike the beholder of a real fact, especially such a one as has not been taught, by an enlarged mind and education, to generalize his observations. I am anticipated in a sort of parallel which I

Digitized by Google

intended to have made between the romances of Gulliver and Robinson Crusoe by the ingenious author of the History of Fiction, whose words I adopt with pleasure, as expressing an opinion which I have been long induced to hold. After illustrating his proposition, by showing how Crusoe verifies his narrative of a storm, through means of a detail of particular incidents, he proceeds:—"those minute references immediately lead us to give credit to the whole narrative, since we think they would hardly have been mentioned unless they had been true. The same circumstantial detail of facts is remarkable in Gulliver's Travels, and we are led on by them to a partial belief in the most improbable narrations."*

The genius of De Foe has never been questioned, but his sphere of information was narrow; and hence his capacity of fictitious invention was limited to one or two characters. A plain sailor, as Robinson Crusoe,—a blunt soldier, as his supposed "Cavalier,"—a sharper in low life, like some of his other fictitious personages, were the only disguises which the extent of his information permitted him to assume. In this respect he is limited, like the sorcerer in the Indian tale, whose powers of transformation were confined to assuming the likeness of two or three animals only. But Swift seems, like the Persian dervise, to have possessed the faculty of transfusing his own soul into the body of any one whom he selected;—of seeing with his eyes, employing every organ of his sense, and even becoming master of the powers of his judgment. Lemuel Gulliver the traveller, Isaac Bickerstaff the astrologer, the Frenchman who writes the new journey to Paris, Mrs. Harris, Mary the cook-maid, the grave projector who proposes a plan for relieving the poor by eating their children, and the vehement Whig politician who remonstrates against the enormities of the Dublin signs, are all persons as distinct from each other as they are in appearance from the Dean of St. Patrick's. Each maintains his own character, moves in his own sphere, and is

* Dunlop's History of Fiction, Vol. III. p. 400.

Digitized by Google

struck with those circumstances which his situation in life, or habits of thinking, have rendered most interesting to him as an individual.

The proposition I have ventured to lay down, respecting the art of giving verisimilitude to a fictitious narrative, has a corollary resting on the same principles. As minute particulars, pressing close upon the observation of the narrator, occupy a disproportionate share of his narrative and of his observation, so circumstances more important in themselves, in many cases, attract his notice only partially, and are therefore but imperfectly detailed. In other words, there is a distance as well as a foreground in narrative, as in natural perspective, and the scale of objects necessarily decreases as they are withdrawn from the vicinity of him who reports them. In this particular, the art of Swift is equally manifest. The information which Gulliver acquires from hearsay, is communicated in a more vague and general manner than that reported on his own knowledge. He does not, like other voyagers into Utopian realms, bring us back a minute account of their laws and government, but merely such general information upon these topics, as a well-informed and curious stranger may be reasonably supposed to acquire, during some months residence in a foreign country. In short, the narrator is the centre and main-spring of the story, which neither exhibits a degree of extended information, such as circumstances could not permit him to acquire, nor omits those minute incidents, which the same circumstances rendered of importance to him, because immediately affecting his own person.

Swift has the more easily attained this perfection of fictitious narrative, because in all his works of whatever description, he has maintained the most undeviating attention to the point at issue. What Mr. Cambridge has justly observed of the Battle of the Books, is equally true as a general characteristic of Swift's writings; whoever examines them will find, that, through the whole piece, no one episode or allusion is introduced for its own sake, but every part appears not only consistent with, but written for the express purpose of strengthening and supporting, the whole.

Digitized by Google

Upon the style of Swift, Dr. Johnson has made the following observations, which are entitled to great weight from the learning and character of the critic. It is, however, to be considered, that the author of the Rambler may be supposed in some degree to undervalue a structure of composition, so strikingly opposed to his own, and that Dr. Johnson, as has already been observed, appears to have been unfriendly to the memory of Dean Swift.*

"In his works he has given very different specimens both of sentiments and expression. His 'Tale of a Tub' has little resemblance to his other pieces. It exhibits a vehemence and rapidity of mind, a copiousness of images, and vivacity of diction, such as he afterward never possessed, or never exerted. It is of a mode so distinct and peculiar, that it must be considered by itself; what is true of that, is not true of any thing else which he has written.

"In his other works is found an equable tenor of easy

* When employed in writing the Dean's life, Dr. Johnson received two invitations from Deane Swift, Esq. to spend some time at his house in Worcestershire, one of which was conveyed by Mr. Theophilus Swift, his son, to whom I owe this information. The purpose was to make every communication in his power, that might throw light on the history of his great and beloved relative. But Dr. Johnson declined the invitation, and even refused to receive the information offered, or to communicate with Mr. Deane Swift upon the subject. It would be difficult to assign a motive for the prejudice against Swift, so obvious in Dr. Johnson's conduct on this occasion, as well as in many passages of his life of the Dean, especially considering that these great men coincided in political sentiments. There is a letter from Earl Gower to some friend of Swift, dated 1st August 1738, in which he endeavours to secure the Dean's interest for the purpose of procuring for Johnson the degree of Master of Arts in the University of Dublin, in order to render him eligible to be teacher of a charity-school at Appleby. The Dean may have refused or neglected this application. The late Bishop of Dromore, who had many opportunities of personal observation, was of opinion, that Dr. Johnson's dislike to Swift arose from the Dean's having opposed Dr. Madden's scheme for distributing prizes in Trinity College. It must be remembered, that Dr. Johnson himself revised Madden's poem on the death of Boulter. Yet certainly it is unlikely that, so late as 1742, when that primate died, the Dean should have publicly interested himself in the affairs of the university.

Digitized by Google

language, which rather trickles than flows. His delight was in simplicity. That he has in his works no metaphor, as has been said, is not true; but his few metaphors seem to be received rather by necessity than choice. He studied purity; and though perhaps all his strictures are not exact, yet it is not often that solecisms can be found; and whoever depends on his authority may generally conclude himself safe. His sentences are never too much dilated, or contracted; and it will not be easy to find any embarrassment in the complication of his clauses, any inconsequence in his connexions, or abruptness in his transitions.

"His style was well suited to his thoughts, which are never subtilized by nice disquisitions, decorated by sparkling conceits, elevated by ambitious sentences, or variegated by far-sought learning. He pays no court to the passions; he excites neither surprise nor admiration; he always understands himself, and his readers always understand him. The peruser of Swift wants little previous knowledge; and it will be sufficient that he is acquainted with common words and common things; he is neither required to mount elevations, nor to explore profundities; his passage is always on a level, along solid ground, without asperities, without obstruction."

The general character of Swift has been excellently drawn by the learned and candid Granger, with which I request permission to close these memoirs:

"Jonathan Swift was blessed in a higher degree than any of his contemporaries, with the powers of a creative genius. The more we dwell upon the character and writings of this great man, the more they improve upon us: in whatever light we view him, he still appears to be an original. His wit, his humour, his patriotism, his charity, and even his piety, were of a different cast from those of other men. He had in his virtues few equals, and in his talents no superior. In that of humour, and more especially in irony, he ever was, and probably ever will be, unrivalled. He did the highest honour to his country by his parts, and was a great blessing to it by the vigilance and activity of his public spirit. His style, which generally consists of the most

Digitized by Google

naked and simple terms, is strong, clear, and expressive; familiar, without vulgarity or meanness; and beautiful, without affectation or ornament.' He is sometimes licentious in his satire; and transgresses the bounds of delicacy and purity. He, in the latter part of his life, availed himself of the privilege of his great wit to trifle; but when, in this instance, we deplore the misapplication of such wonderful abilities, we at the same time admire the whims, if not the dotages, of a Swift. He was, perhaps, the only clergyman of his time, who had a thorough knowledge of men and manners. His 'Tale of a Tub,' his 'Gulliver's Travels,' and his 'Drapier's Letters,' are the most considerable of his prose works; and his 'Legion Club,' his 'Cadenus and Vanessa,' and his 'Rhapsody on Poetry,' are at the head of his poetical performances. His writings, in general, are regarded as standing models of our language, as well as perpetual monuments of their author's fame."

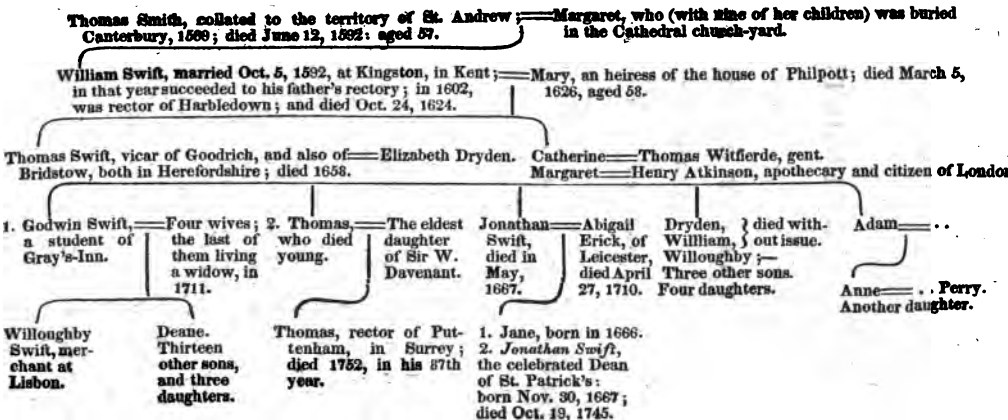
Digitized by Google

APPENDIX. NO. I.

PEDIGREE AND ANECDOTES OF THE FAMILY OF SWIFT.

PEDIGREE OF THE YOUNGER BRANCH OF THE SWIFTS OF YORKSHIRE.

ARMS: *Or, a chevron nébulé, Argent and Azure, between three bucks in full course, Vert.*


Thomas Smith, collated to the territory of St. Andrew; Canterbury, 1569; died June 12, 1592: aged 57.
Margaret, who (with nine of her children) was buried in the Cathedral church-yard.
William Swift, married Oct. 5, 1592, at Kingston, in Kent; in that year succeeded to his father's rectory; in 1602, was rector of Harbledown; and died Oct. 24, 1624.
Mary, an heiress of the house of Philpott; died March 5, 1626, aged 58.
Thomas Swift, vicar of Goodrich, and also of Bridstow, both in Herefordshire; died 1658.
Elizabeth Dryden.
Catherine
Margaret
Thomas Witfierde, gent.
Henry Atkinson, apothecary and citizen of London.
1. Godwin Swift, a student of Gray's-Inn.
Four wives; the last of them living a widow, in 1711.
2. Thomas, who died young.
The eldest daughter of Sir W. Davenant.
Jonathan Swift, died in May, 1667.
Abigail Erick, of Leicester, died April 27, 1710.
Dryden, William, Willoughby; — Three other sons. Four daughters.
died without issue.
Adam
Anne
Perry.
Another daughter.
Willoughby Swift, merchant at Lisbon.
Deane. Thirteen other sons, and three daughters.
Thomas, rector of Puttenham, in Surrey; died 1752, in his 87th year.
1. Jane, born in 1666.
2. *Jonathan Swift*, the celebrated Dean of St. Patrick's: born Nov. 30, 1667; died Oct. 19, 1745.

Digitized by Google

ANECDOTES

OF THE

FAMILY OF SWIFT.

A FRAGMENT.

WRITTEN BY DR. SWIFT.

[The original Manuscript, in his own hand, is lodged in the University Library of Dublin.]

THE family of the Swifts was ancient in Yorkshire; from them descended a noted person, who passed under the name of Cavaliero *Swift*, a man of wit and humour. He was made an Irish Peer by King James or King Charles the First, with the title of Baron *Carlingford*,* but never was in that kingdom. Many traditional pleasant stories are related of him, which the family planted in Ireland had received from their parents. This lord died without issue male; and his heiress, whether of the first or second descent, was married to *Robert Fielding*, Esq., commonly called *Handsome Fielding;* she brought him a considerable estate in Yorkshire, which he squandered away, but had no children; the Earl of Eglinton married another co-heiress of the same family, as he has often told me.†

* *Barnam Swift*, Esq. was created Viscount (not Baron) of Carlingford, by King Charles I. March 20, 1627, and by his death in 1642, S. P. the title became extinct.

† Scottish genealogists do not record such a marriage in the pedigree of the Eglintoun family.

Digitized by Google

Another of the same family was Sir *Edward Swift*, well known in the times of the great rebellion and usurpation, but I am ignorant whether he left heirs or not.

Of the other branch, whereof the greatest part settled in Ireland, the founder was *William Swift*, prebendary of Canterbury,* towards the last years of Queen Elizabeth, and during the reign of King James the First. He was a divine of some distinction. There is a sermon of his extant, and the title is to be seen in the catalogue of the Bodleian Library, but I never could get a copy, and I suppose it would now be of little value.†

This William married the heiress of *Philpott*, I suppose a Yorkshire‡ gentleman, by whom he got a very considerable estate, which, however, she kept in her own power; I know not by what artifice. She was a capricious, ill-natured, and passionate woman, of which I have been told several instances. And it has been a continual tradition in the family, that she absolutely disinherited her only son *Thomas*, for no greater crime than that of robbing an orchard when he was a boy. And thus much is certain, that except a church or chapter lease which was not renewed, Thomas never enjoyed more than one hundred pounds a-year, which was all at Goodrich, in Herefordshire, whereof not above one half is now in the possession of a great grandson.

His original picture§ is now in the hands of *Godwin Swift*, of Dublin, Esq. his great grandson, as well as that of his wife, who seems to have a good deal of the shrew in her countenance;‖ whose arms of an heiress are joined with his own; and by the last he seems to have been a person somewhat fantastic; for in these he gives as his device, a dolphin (in those days called a Swift) twisted about an anchor, with this motto, *Festina lente*.

There is likewise a seal with the same coat of arms, (his not joined with his wife's,) which the said William commonly made use of, and this is also now in the possession of Godwin Swift above mentioned.

* William Swift was rector of St. Andrew's in Canterbury, not a prebendary.

† It was preached Jan. 25, 1621, at St. George's, Canterbury, at the funeral of Sir Thomas Wilson, in Rom. viii. 18, and is written much in the style and manner of that age.—D. S.

‡ More probably of Kent.—D. S.

§ Drawn in 1603, æt. 57; his wife's in the same year, æt. 54.—D. S.

‖ These pictures are still preserved in the family.

Digitized by Google

His eldest son *Thomas* seems to have been a clergyman before his father's death. He was vicar of Goodrich, in Herefordshire, within a mile or two of Ross; he had likewise another church living, with about one hundred pounds a-year in land, as I have already mentioned. He built a house on his own land in the village of Goodrich, which, by the architecture, denotes the builder to have been somewhat whimsical and singular, and very much toward a projector. The house is above a hundred years old, and still in good repair, inhabited by a tenant of the female line, but the landlord, a young gentleman, lives upon his own estate in Ireland.*

This Thomas was distinguished by his courage, as well as his loyalty to King Charles the First, and the sufferings he underwent for that prince, more than any person of his condition in England. Some historians of those times relate several particulars of what he acted, and what hardships he underwent for the person and cause of that blessed martyred prince. He was plundered by the Roundheads six-and-thirty times, some say above fifty. He engaged his small estate, and gathered all the money he could get, quilted it in his waistcoat, got off to a town held for the king, where being asked by the governor, who knew him well, "What he could do for his majesty?" Mr. Swift said, "he would give the king his coat," and stripping it off, presented it to the governor; who observing it to be worth little, Mr. Swift said, "then take my waistcoat:" he bid the governor weigh it in his hand, who, ordering it to be ripped, found it lined with three hundred broad pieces of gold, which, as it proved a seasonable relief, must be allowed an extraordinary supply from a private clergyman with ten children, of a small estate, so often plundered, and soon after turned out of his livings in the church.

At another time, being informed that three hundred horse of the rebel party, intended in a week to pass over a

* This house, now the property of Mr. Theophilus Swift, is still standing. A vault is shown beneath the kitchen, accessible only by raising one of the flag stones. Here were concealed the provisions of bread and milk, which supported the lives of the family after they had been plundered by the Parliamentary soldiers. The vicar was in those days considered as a conjuror, especially when, his neighbours being discharged from assisting him, and all his provisions destroyed, he still continued to subsist his family. This vault is probably one of the peculiarities of architecture noticed by the Dean.

Digitized by Google

certain river, upon an attempt against the Cavaliers, Mr. Swift having a head mechanically turned, he contrived certain pieces of iron with three* spikes, whereof one must always be with the point upward; he placed them over night in the ford, where he received notice that the rebels would pass early the next morning, which they accordingly did, and lost two hundred of their men, who were drowned or trod to death by the falling of their horses, or torn by the spikes.

His sons, whereof four were settled in Ireland, (driven thither by their sufferings, and by the death of their father,) related many other passages, which they learned either from their father himself, or from what had been told them by the most credible persons of Herefordshire, and some neighbouring counties: and which some of those sons often told to their children; many of which are still remembered, but many more forgot.

He was deprived of both his church livings sooner than most other loyal clergymen, upon account of his superior zeal for the king's cause, and his estate sequestered. His preferments, at least that of Goodrich, were given to a fanatical saint, who scrupled not, however, to conform upon the Restoration, and lived many years, I think till after the Revolution: I have seen many persons at Goodrich, who knew and told me his name, which I cannot now remember.

The lord-treasurer Oxford told the Dean, that he had among his father's (Sir Edward Harley's) papers, several letters from Mr. Thomas Swift, writ in those times, which he promised to give to the grandson, whose life I am now writing; but never going to his house in Herefordshire while he was treasurer, and the queen's death happening in three days after his removal, the Dean went to Ireland, and the earl being tried for his life, and dying while the Dean was in Ireland, he could never get them.

Mr. Thomas Swift died in the year 1658, and in the 63d year of his age; his body lies under the altar at Goodrich, with a short inscription.† He died about two years before

* It should be four.—S.

† This was erected by the Dean, and was the subject of some pleasantry between Pope and him, page 7, note. At the same time the Dean gave a chalice to the church of Goodrich. The following note, directing how it should be conveyed thither, is copied from a fragment found among Mr. Lyons' papers. It seems to have been written by that great grandson of the vicar of Goodrich, who was then in possession of part of the family estate. "Doctor

Digitized by Google

the return of King Charles the Second, who, by the recommendation of some prelates, had promised, if ever God should restore him, that he would promote Mr. Swift in the church, and otherwise reward his family, for his extraordinary services and zeal, and persecutions in the royal cause; but Mr. Swift's merit died with himself.*

"Doctor Swift will bee obligeing to Goodrich in presenting the cupp to our church, which is Goodrich church, and is a vicaridge endow'd. Our grandfather, Mr. Thomas Swift, was vicar of this church of Goodrich. The present vicar is Mr. Daniell Wilson. 'Twill be a very safe way to direct the cupp to Bristoll, to Mr. James Hillhouse, merchant there, and direct him to deliver it to the present vicar's order. We have correspondence every fortnight by a navigable river to Bristoll." The chalice had been the property of Swift's grandfather, as appears from the following inscription; THOMAS SWIFT, HUJUS ECCLESIÆ RECTOR, NOTUS IN HISTORIIS OB EA QUÆ FECIT ET PASSUS EST PRO CAROLO PRIMO, EX HOC CALICE ÆGROTANTIBUS PROPINAVIT EUNDEM CALICEM JONATH. SWIFT, S. T. D. DECAN. SANCTI PATRICII, DUBLIN, THOMÆ EX FILIO NEPOS HUIC ECCLESIÆ IN PERPETUAM DEDICAT. 1725.

This inscription is from a scroll in the Dean's hand-writing, bearing the following variation in that of Tickell the poet. "*Vinum ex hoc calice consecratum fidelibus fuga aut morbo propinavit.*" It is said, by tradition in Mr. Tickell's family, that the inscription was also revised by Addison.

* It appears that the Dean intended to have enlarged this memorial of his ancestors with the assistance of Dr. Lyons, among whose papers the editor found the following memorandum, labelled in Swift's hand-writing, "Memoirs of my grandfather, Thomas Swift, by Mr. Lyons. April 1738." The editor has prefixed the extract from Mercurius Rusticus, to which Mr. Lyons' memoranda refer.

"When the Earl of Stamford was in Herefordshire, in October 1642, and pillaged all that kept faith and allegiance to the king, information was given to Mistris Swift, wife of Thomas Swift, parson of Goodwich, that her house was designed to be plundered. To prevent so great a danger, she instantly repaired to Hereford, where the earl then was, some ten miles from her own home, to petition him that no violence might be offered to her house or goods. He most nobly, and according to the goodness of his disposition, threw the petition away, and swore no small oaths that she should be plundered to-morrow. The good gentlewoman, being out of hope to prevail, and seeing there was no good to be done by petitioning him, speeds home as fast as she could, and that night removed as much of her goods as the shortness of the time would permit. Next morning, to make good the Earl of Stamford's word, Captain Kirle's troop, consisting of seventy horse and thirty foot, which were hangers-on, (birds of prey,) came to Mr. Swift's house. There they took away all his provision of victuals, corn, household stuff, which was not conveyed away; they empty his beds, and fill the ticks with malt; they rob him of his cart and six horses, and make this part of their

Digitized by Google

He left ten sons and three or four daughters, most of which lived to be men and women: his eldest son, *Godwin*

theft the means to convey away the rest. Mistris Swift, much affrighted to see such a sight as this, thought it best to save herself though she lost her goods; therefore, taking up a young child in her arms, began to secure herself by flight, which one of the troopers perceiving, he commanded her to stay, or (holding his pistol at her breast) threatened to shoot her dead. She (good woman) fearing death, whether she went or returned, at last, shunning that death which was next unto her, she retires back to her house, where she saw herself undone, and yet durst not oppose or ask why they did so. Having thus rifled the house and gone, next morning early she goes again to Hereford, and there again petitions the earl to show some compassion on her and her ten children, and that he would be pleased to cause her horses, and some part of her goods, to be restored unto her. The good earl was so far from granting her petition, that he would not vouchsafe so much as to read it. When she could not prevail herself, she makes use of the mediation of friends. These have the repulse too, his lordship remaining inexorable, without any inclination to mercy. At last, hoping that all men's hearts were not adamant relentless, she leaves the earl, and makes her address to Captain Kirle, who, upon her earnest entreaty, grants her a protection for what was left: but for restitution, there was no hope for that. This protection cost her no less than thirty shillings. It seems paper and ink are dear in those parts. And now, thinking herself secure in this protection, she returns home, in hope that what was left she might enjoy in peace and quietness. She had not been long at home but Captain Kirle sends her word, that, if it pleased her, she might buy four of her own six horses again, assuring her, by her father's servant and tenant, that she should not fear being plundered of them any more by the Earl of Stamford's forces, while they were in those parts. Encouraged by these promises, she was content to buy her own, and deposited eight pounds ten shillings for four of her horses. And now conceiving the storm to be blown over, and all danger past, and placing much confidence in her purchased protection, she causes all her goods secured in her neighbours' houses to be brought home; and, since it could not be better, rejoiced that she had not lost all. She had not enjoyed these thoughts long, but Captain Kirle sent unto her for some vessels of cyder, whereof having tasted, but not liking it, since he could not have drink for himself he would have provender for his horse, and therefore, instead of cyder, he demands ten bushels of oats. Mistris Swift, seeing that the denial might give some ground of a quarrel, sent him word that her husband had not two bushels of oats in a year for tythe, nor did they sow any on their gleab: both of which were most true. Yet, to show how willing she was (to her power) to comply with him, that the messenger might not return empty, she sent him forty shillings to buy oats. Suddenly after the captain of Goodridge castle sends to Mr. Swift's house for victual and corn. Mistris Swift instantly shows him her protection. He, to answer show with show, shows her his warrant, and so, without any regard

Digitized by Google

Swift, of the Inner Temple,* Esq. (so styled by Guillim the herald, in whose book the family is described at large,)

to her protection, seizeth upon that provision which was in the house, together with the cyder which Captain Kirle had refused. Hereupon Mistris Swift writes to Captain Kirle, complaining of this injury, and the affront done to him in slighting his protection; but, before the messenger could return with an answer to her letter, some from the castle come a second time to plunder the house, and they did what they came for. Presently after comes a letter from Captain Kirle in answer to Mistris Swift, that the Earl of Stamford did by no means approve of the injuries done unto her, and withal, by word of mouth, sends to her for more oats. She, perceiving that as long as she gave they would never leave asking, resolved to be drilled no more. The return not answering expectation, on the 3d of December, Captain Kirle's lieutenant, attended by a considerable number of dragoons, comes to Mr. Swift's house, and demands entrance; but the doors being kept shut against them, and not being able to force them, they broke down two iron bars in a stone window, and so, with swords drawn and pistols cocked, they enter the house. Being entered, they take all Master Swift and his wife's apparel, his books, and his children's cloaths, they being in bed; and those poor children, that hung by their cloaths, unwilling to part with them, they swang them about until (their hold-fast failing) they dashed them against the walls. They took away all his servants' clothes, and made so clean work with one, that they left him not a shirt to cover his nakedness. There was one of the children, an infant, lying in the cradle, they rob'd that, and left not the little poor soul a rag to defend it from the cold. They took away all the iron, pewter, and brass; and a very fair cupboard of glasses, which they could not carry away, they broke to pieces: and the four horses lately redeemed are with them lawful prize again, and left nothing of all the goods but a few stools, for his wife, children, and servants, to sit down and bemoan their distressed condition. Having taken away all, and being gone, Mistris Swift, in compassion to her poor infant in the cradle, took it up, almost starved with cold, and wrapped it in a petticoat, which she took off from herself: and now hoped, that having nothing to lose would be a better protection for their persons than that which she purchased of Captain Kirle for thirty shillings. But, as if Job's messenger would never make an end, her three maid-servants, whom they in the castle had compelled to carry the poultry to the castle, return and tell their mistris that they in the castle said, that they had a warrant to seize upon Mistris Swift and

* Of Gray's Inn, not of the Inner Temple. D. S.

In a fragment of the Dean's hand-writing, entitled "Memorial of my grandfather for a monument at Goodrich," there is a note of armorial bearings, "Or, Chevron nebule argent and azure between three bucks in full course, vert. N. B. These arms borne by Godwin Swift of Goodridge, Co. of Hereford, Esq. one of the Society of Gray's Inn."

Digitized by Google

was, I think, called to the bar before the Restoration. He married a relation of the old Marchioness of Ormond, and

bring her into the castle, and that they would make her three maid-servants wait on her there, threatening to plunder all under the petticoat, and other uncivil immodest words, not fit for them to speak, or me to write. Hereupon Mistris Swift fled to the place where her husband, for fear of the rebels, had withdrawn himself. She had not been gone two hours, but they come from the castle, and bring with them three teams to carry away what was before designed for plunder, but wanted means of conveyance. When they came there was a batch of bread hot in the oven. This they seize on. Ten children on their knees intreat but for one loaf, and at last, with much importunity, obtained it; but before the children had eaten it they took even that one loaf away, and left them destitute of a morsel of bread amongst ten children. Ransacking every corner of the house, that nothing might be left behind, they find a small pewter dish in which the dry-nurse had put pap to feed the poor infant, the mother who gave it suck being fled to save her life. This they seize on too. The nurse intreats, for God's sake, that they would spare that, pleading, that, in the mother's absence, it was all the sustenance which was or could be provided to sustain the life of the child, and, on her knees, intreated to show mercy unto the child, that 'knew not the right hand from the left,' a motive which prevailed with God himself, though justly incensed against Nineveh.

"Master Swift's eldest son, a youth, seeing this barbarous cruelty, demanded of them a reason for this so hard usage. They replied, that his father was traitor to the king and parliament, and added, that they would keep them so short, that they should eat the very flesh from their arms; and, to make good their word, they threaten the miller, that, if he ground any corn for these children, they would grind him in his own mill; and, not contented with this, they go to Mr. Swift's next neighbour, (whose daughter was his servant,) and take him prisoner; they examine him on oath what goods of Mr. Swift's he had in his custody. He professing that he had none, they charge him to take his daughter away from Mr. Swift's service, or else they threaten to plunder him; and, to make sure work, they make him give them security to obey all their commands. Terrified with this, the neighbours stand afar off, and pity the distressed condition of these persecuted children, but dare not come or send to their relief. By this means the children and servants had no sustenance, hardly anything to cover them, from Friday six o'clock at night, until Saturday twelve at night, until, at last, the neighbours, moved with the lamentable cryes and complaints of the children and servants, one of the neighbours, overlooking all difficulties, and showing that he durst be charitable in despite of these monsters, ventured in, and brought them some provision. And if the world would know what it was that so exasperated these rebels against this gentleman, the Earl of Stamford, a man that is not bound to give an account of all his actions, gave two reasons for it: first, because he had bought arms and conveyed them into Monmouthshire,—which, under his lordship's good fa-

Digitized by Google

upon that account, as well as his father's loyalty, the old Duke of Ormond made him his attorney-general in the palatinate of Tipperary. He had four wives, one of which, to the great offence of his family, was co-heiress to Admiral *Deane*, who was one of the regicides. Godwin left several children, who have all estates. He was an ill pleader, but perhaps *a little too** dexterous in the subtle parts of the law.

vour, was not so; and, secondly, because, not long before, he preached a sermon in Rosse upon that text, 'Give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,' in which his lordship said he had spoken treason, in endeavouring to give Cæsar more than his due. These two crimes cost Mr. Swift no less than 300*l*."—*Mercurius Rusticus*. London, 1635. 8vo, p. 82—88.

Here begin Dr. Lyons' Memoirs. The passages in Italics are written by Swift.

"Thus far the Mercury; which being about a year after the transacting of these barbarities, could not account for Mr. Swift's sequestration, because that was not formally issued until about three years after, viz. in 1646; and on July 5th that year, I find the Committee of Hereford sequestered and ordered the profits of Gotheridge into the hands of Jonathan Dryden, minister, until the Christmas following. This Mr. Dryden was to see the cure duly officiated; and to receive, gather, and dispose of the dues of the living.

"When his other living of Bridstow was put under sequestration, I know not. But September 25th, that year also, the same committee ordered his ejectment from it for scandal and delinquency, and for being in actual service against the Parliament. At the same time also, they ordered Mr. Jonathan Smith, the then curate, to be inducted in this cure." ["*What became of him afterwards I know not, but in* 1654 *one John Somers got this living.*"]

"The 29th March following, the committee also ordered his ejectment also from Gotheridge, and the inducting of Giles Rawlins to succeed him in that parish, and assign the same reasons for it, as they before had done for the turning him out of Bridstow." ["*In* 1654, *one William Tingham was admitted to it.*"]

"Mr. Swift was also imprisoned by the committee as soon as the garrison of Hereford fell into the hands of the rebels. I find him in custody at Ragland Castle, when the committee ordered his ejectment from Gotheridge.

"He had a temporal estate in Gotheridge and Marstow, which the same committee ordered to be sequestrated, Aug. 4, 1646. After which he endured many hardships with his numerous family, but lived to be restored with the church and his majesty, and died at Gotheridge in a good old age." ["*A mistake, for he died* 1658."]

* These three words were interlined in the original, some time after it was first written, and were designed by the Doctor to be a sneer upon the memory of his uncle.—D. S.

Digitized by Google

The second son of Mr. *Thomas Swift* was called by the same name, was bred at Oxford, and took orders. He married the eldest daughter of Sir *William d'Avenant*, but died young, and left only one son, who was also called *Thomas*, and is now rector of Putenham in Surrey. His widow lived long, was extremely poor, and in part supported by the famous Dr. South, who had been her husband's intimate friend.

The rest of his sons, as far as I can call to mind, were Mr. *Dryden* Swift, called so after the name of his mother, who was a near relation to Mr. Dryden the poet, *William*, *Jonathan*, and *Adam*, who all lived and died in Ireland; but none of them left male issue except *Jonathan*, who, beside a daughter, left one son, born seven months after his father's death, of whose life I intend to write a few memorials.

J. S. D. D. and D. of St. P———, was the only son of Jonathan Swift, who was the seventh or eighth son of Mr. Thomas Swift above-mentioned, so eminent for his loyalty and his sufferings.

His father died young, about two years after his marriage; he had some employments and agencies; his death was much lamented on account of his reputation for integrity, with a tolerable good understanding.

He married Mrs. *Abigail Erick*,* of Leicestershire, descended from the most ancient family of the Ericks, who derive their lineage from Erick the Forester, a great commander, who raised an army to oppose the invasion of William the Conqueror, by whom he was vanquished, but afterward employed to command that prince's forces; and in his old age retired to his house in Leicestershire, where his family has continued ever since, but declining every

* This lady had much of her celebrated son's peculiar humour. She came to visit him after he was settled at Laracor, and lodged with Mr. Brent, a printer in George's Lane, Dublin, husband of the person who was afterwards the Dean's housekeeper, and who is commemorated by him in the laughable verses, beginning—

Dingley and Brent,
Wherever they went, &c.

Mrs. Swift, who had probably discovered the gossiping temper of her landlady, amused her credulity by pretending she had come to Ireland to receive the addresses of a lover, and under that character received her son Jonathan's first visit, before she acquainted Mrs. Brent with the trick she had put upon her curiosity.

Digitized by Google

age, and are now in the condition of very private gentlemen.*

This marriage was on both sides very indiscreet, or his wife brought her husband little or no fortune; and his death happening so suddenly,† before he could make a sufficient establishment for his family, his son (not then born) hath often been heard to say, that he felt the consequences of that marriage, not only through the whole course of his education, but during the greatest part of his life.

He was born in Dublin, on St. Andrew's day; and when he was a year old, an event happened to him that seems very unusual; for his nurse, who was a woman of Whitehaven, being under an absolute necessity of seeing one of her relations, who being then extremely sick, and from whom she expected a legacy; and being extremely fond of the infant, she stole him on shipboard unknown to his mother and uncle, and carried him with her to Whitehaven, where he continued for almost three years. For, when the matter was discovered, his mother sent orders by all means not to hazard a second voyage, till he could be better able to bear it. The nurse was so careful of him, that before he returned he had learned to spell; and by the time that he was five years old he could read any chapter in the Bible.

After his return to Ireland, he was sent at six years old to the school of Kilkenny, from whence, at fourteen, he was admitted into the university at Dublin; where, by the ill treatment of his nearest relations, he was so much discouraged and sunk in his spirits, that he too much neglected some parts of his academic studies; for which he had no great relish by nature, and turned himself to reading history and poetry: so that, when the time came for taking his degree of bachelor, although he had lived with great regularity and due observance of the statutes, he was stopped of his degree for dulness and insufficiency; and at last hardly admitted, in a manner little to his credit, which is called in that college *speciali gratiâ*. And this

* The family of *Erick*, which has produced many eminent men, is still represented by two respectable branches, the *Heyricks* of Leicester town, and the *Herricks* of Beaumanor. Of both these branches, distinct pedigrees and many curious historical anecdotes are given in the "History of Leicestershire," Vol. II. p. 215; Vol. III. p. 148.

† See at the conclusion of this article some particulars concerning the misfortunes of Swift's parents.

Digitized by Google

discreditable mark, as I am told, stands upon record in their college registry.

The troubles then breaking out, he went to his mother, who lived in Leicester; and after continuing there some months, he was received by Sir William Temple, whose father had been a great friend to the family, and who was now retired to his house called Moor-Park, near Farnham in Surrey, where he continued for about two years: for he happened, before twenty years old, by a surfeit of fruit, to contract a giddiness and coldness of stomach, that almost brought him to his grave; and this disorder pursued him with intermissions of two or three years to the end of his life. Upon this occasion he returned to Ireland, by advice of physicians, who weakly imagined that his native air might be of some use to recover his health: but growing worse, he soon went back to Sir William Temple; with whom, growing into some confidence, he was often trusted with matters of great importance. King William had a high esteem for Sir William Temple by a long acquaintance, while that gentleman was ambassador and mediator of a general peace at Nimeguen. The king, soon after his expedition to England, visited his old friend often at Sheen, and took his advice in affairs of greatest consequence. But Sir William Temple, weary of living so near London, and resolving to retire to a more private scene, bought an estate near Farnham in Surrey, of about L.100 a-year, where Mr. Swift accompanied him.

About that time a bill was brought into the House of Commons for triennial parliaments; against which the king, who was a stranger to our constitution, was very averse, by the advice of some weak people, who persuaded the Earl of Portland that King Charles the First lost his crown and life by consenting to pass such a bill. The earl, who was a weak man, came down to Moor-Park, by his majesty's orders, to have Sir William Temple's advice, who said much to show him the mistake. But he continued still to advise the king against passing the bill. Whereupon Mr. Swift was sent to Kensington with the whole account of the matter in writing, to convince the king and the earl how ill they were informed. He told the earl, to whom he was referred by his majesty, (and gave it in writing,) that the ruin of King Charles the First was not owing to his passing the triennial bill, which did not hinder him from dissolving any parliament, but to the passing of another bill, which put it out of his power to dissolve the parliament then in being, without the consent

Digitized by Google

of the house. Mr. Swift, who was well versed in English history, although he was then under twenty-one years old, gave the king a short account of the matter, but a more large one to the Earl of Portland, but all in vain; for the king, by ill advisers, was prevailed upon to refuse passing the bill.* This was the first time that Mr. Swift had any converse with courts, and he told his friends it was the first incident that helped to cure him of vanity. The consequence of this wrong step in his majesty was very unhappy; for it put that prince under a necessity of introducing those people called Whigs into power and employments, in order to pacify them. For, although it be held a part of the king's prerogative to refuse passing a bill, yet the learned in the law think otherwise, from that expression used at the coronation, wherein the prince obliges himself to consent to all laws, *quas vulgus elegerit.*

Mr. Swift lived with him (Sir William Temple) some time, but resolving to settle himself in some way of living, was inclined to take orders. However, although his fortune was very small, he had a scruple of entering into the church merely for support, and Sir William Temple, then being master of the Rolls in Ireland, offered him an employ of about L.120 a-year in that office; whereupon Mr. Swift told him, that since he had now an opportunity of living without being driven into the church for a maintenance, he was recommended to the Lord Capel, then Lord Deputy, who gave him a prebend in the north, worth about L.100 a-year, of which growing weary in a few months, he returned to England, resigned his living in favour of a friend, and continued in Sir William Temple's house till the death of that great man, who, besides a legacy, left him the care and trust and advantage of publishing his posthumous writings.

Upon this event Mr. Swift removed to London, and applied by petition to King William, upon the claim of a promise his majesty had made to Sir William Temple, that he would give Mr. Swift a prebend of Canterbury or Westminster. The Earl of Romney, who professed much friendship for him, promised to second his petition; but as he was an old vicious, illiterate rake, without any sense of truth or honour, said not a word to the king. And Mr. Swift, after long attendance in vain, thought it better to

* This happened in the year 1693, when the bill for triennial parliaments was rejected, not by the king, but by the House of Commons.

Digitized by Google

comply with an invitation given him by the Earl of Berkeley to attend him to Ireland, as his chaplain and private secretary; his lordship having been appointed one of the lords-justices of that kingdom. He attended his lordship, who landed near Waterford, and Mr. Swift acted as Secretary during the whole journey to Dublin. But another person had so insinuated himself into the earl's favour, by telling him that the post of secretary was not proper for a clergyman, nor would be of any advantage to one who only aimed at church preferments, that his lordship, after a poor apology, gave that office to the other.

In some months the deanery of Derry fell vacant; and it was the Earl of Berkeley's turn to dispose of it. Yet things were so ordered, that the secretary having received a bribe, the deanery was disposed of to another, and Mr. Swift was put off with some other church livings not worth above a third part of that rich deanery, and at this present not a sixth. The excuse pretended was his being too young, although he were then thirty years old.

Extract of authentic particulars respecting the parents of Dean Swift, from Counsellor Duhigg's History of the King's Inn, Dublin, 1806, *p.* 216.

"The reader must at last be relieved from the languid dulness of King's Inns extracts, and the observations which accompany them, by an illustration of a matter which ascertains the birth of as great a genius, and as unbending a patriot, as ever graced this country: it also recognizes the account given by that eminent man of his family and parentage, supported by an undoubted document of his father. In 1665, Jonathan Swift memorials the bench for the office of steward, or under-treasurer, modestly stating, that he was qualified for the employment, by being an assistant to Mr. Wale, who lately filled that situation. He further set forth, *that his father and whole family were loyal, and faithfully served his majesty, as well as Charles I., by which they were great sufferers.* That gentleman was admitted an attorney, and member of the King's Inns, Hilary Term, 1665, in the following terms: 'Jonathan Swift, gentleman, was admitted into the society of the house, and hath paid for his admission (the usual fee) 13s. 4d. on the 26th of January 1664-5.' On the 25th of January, 1665-6, he was appointed steward, or under-treasurer, and afterwards authorized to receive from the mem-

Digitized by Google

bers the pensions and cast commons for the benefit of Mrs. Wale, widow to the preceding steward.

"On the 25th of April 1667, Mr. Swift's untimely death caused a similar application from his afflicted widow to the Bench, that they may authorize her brother-in-law, Mr. William Swift, to collect the arrear due to her husband. Her request was acceded to with becoming promptitude. Such order had a proper effect: however, L.12, and upwards, remained upon settlement due from her husband to the society, and L.100 from the members of that society to Mr. Swift, of which L.76, and upwards, was due by the persons who dined at the Bench table. The legal reader will blush to hear the rule of that grave, learned, and religious body. It was not to advance the L.100 to this unfortunate woman, nor manfully to discharge the acknowledged debt of their own defaulters, but to choose, out of the arrears due to the Bench table, a sum to balance her account of L.12, and to recommend a further payment from the body at large.

"The birth of our great countryman shall be now ascertained beyond cavil or doubt. He was born on the 30th of November 1667; and in the following month of January, his mother renews a complaint of arrears to the Bench, with a pathetic representation of her necessary distress. How many contradictions were heretofore reconciled to make him a native of Leicester; his mother must be presumed to travel post, and at ease, for the purpose of appearing at the King's Inns in five weeks from her lying-in. All this is to be believed in preference to his own account, or the attestation of a respectable friend. However, fancy or falsehood must, I believe, yield to recorded truth, which would be settled beyond contradiction, if abstracts of King's Inns accounts had been printed during the Dean's life, which laudable custom has been only adopted from the year 1797. Let an integrity similar to Swift's mark future anecdotes, and the preceding circumstances ascertain his birth, the profession of his father, and honest, but unmerited adversity of the surviving parent. It was her aggravated misfortune to solicit an unfeeling group, whose sable records attest a more prompt disposition to support fraud and encourage tyranny, than to render justice, or to relieve with sensibility the orphan and widow's forlorn sigh.

"Meantime personal distress multiplied, and deprived her illustrious offspring of maternal care; for we are told, in the life of Swift, that he was nursed by a Whitehaven

Digitized by Google

woman, who was not paid by his impoverished parent, but, feeling the accustomed affection attached to her situation, carried the infant with her to England. This authentic memorial may satisfy the doubts, or remove the scepticism so artfully raised, and industriously circulated, about the time and place of his birth, or the situation of the family. Ireland is satiated with the brave, honest, and enlightened natives who have undoubtedly adorned her kalendar. Swift had neither vanity nor meanness sufficient to deny his country. His classic and accomplished friend, Dr. Sheridan, has confirmed this fact; an authority sufficient to outweigh, by character and situation, an host of venal or interested biographers."

---

*Certificate of Dr. Swift's Degree; taken at Dublin, and sent to Oxford.**

[Swift has himself stated, in the foregoing memoir, that he was admitted to his degree in a manner little to his credit, called in that college *speciali gratia*. No such words appear on the following *testimonia;* which is not surprising, since, if I rightly understand Dr. Barrett, certainly the best possible authority upon the point, the phrase *per specialem gratiam* is never inserted in such certificates, which barely contain the fact that the degree has been duly taken. The words used by Swift are rather perhaps to be understood historically, than literally and formally, and only mean in general, that he gained his degree rather by favour than merit, though no such entry was placed upon the register. But as Swift, during all this memoir, appears to have had his memory sufficiently accurate, as to the passages of his early life, (a circumstance very common where the memory has failed in later events,) it was impossible for a biographer to refuse his evidence respecting a particular, which no one would willingly invent respecting himself.]

Omnibus quorum interest salutem. Nos præpositus sociique seniores Collegii Sacro-sanctæ et Individuæ Trini-

* Extracted from the Congregation-Book by the Rev. Mr. Francis Wise, B.D. keeper of the archives of the University of Oxford and F.S.A. communicated by Richard Rawlinson, LL.D. and F.R. et Aut. S.V.P.

Digitized by Google

tatis juxta Dublin, testamur Jonathan Swift, die decimo quinto Februarii 1685, gradum baccalaureatûs in artibus suscepisse, præstito prius fidelitatis erga regiam majestatem juramento. Quod de predicto testimonium, subscriptis singulorum nominibus, et collegii sigillo quo in hisce utimur, confirmandum curavimus. Datum die tertio Maii 1692.

Robert Huntington, Præpos. L.S.
St. George Ashe.
Richard Reader.
George Brown.
Benjamin Scraggs.

Quibus in venerabili congregatione magistorum regentium, 14 die Junii 1692 habitâ, publicatis, Jonathan Swift (gratiâ prius petitâ et concessâ) ad eundem gradum, statum, et dignitatem, admissus fuit apud Oxonienses, quibus insignitus erat apud suos Dublinienses.

10 Nov. 1758.

Vera copia, *Jonathan Swift*, M.A.
Ric. Rawlinson. *Hart Hall, July* 5, 1692.

Lib. Convocat, ab anno 1683, *ad ann.* 1693.

4 Julii 1692. Whereas Thomas Swift, a complete Bachelor of Arts of the university of Dublin and now of Baliol, has been incorporated and admitted to the same degree in the university, since which time he has performed all the exercises required by the statutes for the taking the degree of Master of Arts, saving only that of determining in Lent, which he humbly prays may, by the favour of the University, be dispensed with, in regard the exercise cannot be done at this time of the year, and it will be of some concern to him to be admitted to be a candidate for the degree of Master of Arts this term; and whereas Jonathan Swift, a complete Bachelor of Arts in the university of Dublin, and now of Hart Hall, being under the same circumstances, and petitioning for the same favour; We, according to the power of the Chancellor delegated to us in that behalf, do hereby give our consent, that both their requests be communicated to the heads of houses, and proposed in convocation. Given under our hands and seals the [fourth day] of July 1692.

Jonathan Edwards, Vice. Can.
Fitzherbert Adams.
Ra. Bathurst.

Digitized by Google

No. II.

DR. SWIFT'S WILL, WITH THE CODICIL ANNEXED.

[The documents are preserved in the Prerogative office, Henrietta Street, Dublin. The will is written upon vellum, by the Dean's own hand. The codicil, which is now published for the first time, is upon paper. It is not in the Dean's hand-writing, excepting the date and signature. The following to Mrs. Whiteway, never before published, forms an introduction to the will.]

A Letter of the Dean to Mrs. Whiteway, endorsed by him, "March 26, 1737, Directions to Mrs. Whiteway."

As soon as you are assured of my death, whether it shall happen to be in town or the country, I desire you will go immediately to the Deanery; and if I die in the country, I desire you will send down a strong coffin, to have my body brought to town, and deposited in any dry part of St. Patrick's Cathedral. Then you are to take my keys, and find my will, and send for as many of my executors as are in town, and in presence of three of them have my will read; and what you see therein that relates to yourself, and is to take place after my death, you are to do in their presence, first delivering my keys to my executors, and then demanding those keys to search where my ready money lies, and take it for your own use, as my will empowers you. But upon their notes you are to lend the money to them, for the charges of my funeral, as directed in my will. Then you are to see that one or more of my said executors shall order my plate and household goods, and other things of value, and what are lockt up in my scrutoires, cabinets, &c. to be entered in a list, and secured in their several places, for my executors to dispose of them as my will provides.

You are likewise to deliver the keys of all the rooms, cellars, &c. to my said executors, and often to entreat them to come to the Deanery, and pursue the directions in my will, &c.

JONATH. SWIFT.

Deanery-house, March 25, 1737.

You are to deliver my executors all my bonds, mortga-

Digitized by Google

ges, and papers relating to money, &c. when they shall have agreed where to deposit them with security, taking their receipts.

JONATH. SWIFT.*

Deanery-house, March 25, 1737.

In the name of God, Amen. I, JONATHAN SWIFT, Doctor in Divinity, and Dean of the Cathedral Church of St. Patrick, Dublin, being at this present of sound mind, although weak in body, do here make my last will and testament, hereby revoking all my former wills.

* It is singular, that among the papers so strangely recovered by Mr. Smith, there is a formal direction to Mrs. Whiteway, of the same tenor in most particulars as that which is preserved in the records, but differing in several others, and particularly in assigning the Church of Holyhead for Swift's place of sepulture. There is some difference also in the list of executors, which, perhaps, arose from the Dean's increasing defect of memory.

TO MRS. MARTHA WHITEWAY.

As soon as Mrs. Whiteway hears of my decease, she is to come immediately to the Deanery, and first take all the keys of my cabinets, and seal them up in a place, in the presence of Mrs. Anne Ridgeway, Roger Kenrick, my verger, and Henry Laird, if any of them be then alive, and in the neighbourhood. Then Mrs. Whiteway is to send for as many of my executors as are in town; and opening my scrutoires, deliver them my will, and let one of the said executors read my will and codicils: There should be three of my executors present at least; they are all in number nine. Then, Mrs. Whiteway is to take all the ready money she can find, if there be two hundred pounds, but no more, which likewise she may lend to the said executors upon their notes. In case I should happen to have not cash enough, or bankers' bills, to pay the charges of transporting my body to Holyhead, and for my burial in the church of that town, as directed in my will, then she is to assist my executors in sending my plate to some banker, together with my valuable curiosities, which she knows where to find, many of which are bequeathed to John Whiteway, younger son of Mrs. Martha Whiteway, and sent to the said Martha to be kept for the use of her said son, except some books bequeathed in my said will or codicils.

I have written the names of my executors in the page on the right hand of this paper.

Mrs. Whiteway is to secure the broad paper-book in quarto, wherein the debts due to me, and debts I owe, entered to this present month of April 1737—seven, together with the whole state of my fortune, as debts, mortgages, &c. and plate, and valuable curiosities, household goods, arrears of tythes, and interest, &c., which my executors are to have a copy of; and Mrs. Whiteway knows where to find all my mortgages, bonds, &c. which she is to give to my said executors, taking their receipt, in order to receive the

Digitized by Google

Imprimis, I bequeath my soul to God, (in humble hopes of his mercy through Jesus Christ,) and my body to the earth. And I desire that my body may be buried in the great aisle of the said cathedral, on the south side, under the pillar next to the monument of Primate Narcissus Marsh, three days after my decease, as privately as possible, and at twelve o'clock at night, and that a black marble of feet square, and seven feet from the ground, fixed to the wall, may be erected, with the following inscription in large letters, deeply cut, and strongly gilded.*

Item, I give and bequeath to my executors, all my worldly substance, of what nature or kind soever, (except such part thereof as is herein after particularly devised,) for the following uses and purposes, that is to say, to the intent that they, or the survivors or survivor of them, his executors, or administrators, as soon as conveniently may be after my death, shall turn it all into ready money, and lay out the same in purchasing lands of inheritance in fee simple, situate in any province in Ireland, except Connaught, but as near to the city of Dublin as conveniently can be found, and not incumbered with, or subject to, any leases for lives renewable, or any terms, for years longer than thirty-one; and I desire that a yearly annuity of twenty pounds sterling, out of the annual profits of such lands, when purchased, and out of the yearly income of my said fortune, devised to my executors, as aforesaid,

several interests or principals to purchase lands, as declared in my last will, which when my said executors have entered in form in the proper courts, they are humbly desired to fulfil as soon as they conveniently can.

Signed and sealed, April 22d, 1737—seven,

JONATHAN SWIFT.

Witnesses present.
Anne Ridgeway.
Alex. Broneers.

[Names of the Executors.]

Robert Lindsay, Justice in the Common Pleas.
Henry Singleton, Prime Serjeant.
Doctor Delany.
Richard Helsham, M.D.
Eton Stannard, Recorder.
Robert Grattan, of St. Audoens.
James Grattan, of St. Nick Within.
James Stopford, of Finglass.
James King, of St. Brides.

[On the back of this letter.]

For Mrs. Whiteway to read, and keep when finished.—Cōdicils. April 16, 1737.

* For this inscription, see p. 304.

Digitized by Google

until such purchase shall be made, shall be paid to Rebecca Dingley, of the city of Dublin, spinster, during her life, by two equal half-yearly payments, on the feast of All Saints, and St. Philip, and St. Jacob, the first payment to be made on such of the said feasts as shall happen next after my death. And that the residue of the yearly profits of the said lands, when purchased, and, until such purchase be made, the residue of the yearly income and interest of my said fortune devised as aforesaid, to my executors, shall be laid out in purchasing a piece of land, situate near Dr. Steevens's hospital, or, if it cannot be there had, somewhere in or near the city of Dublin, large enough for the purposes herein after mentioned, and in building thereon an hospital large enough for the reception of as many idiots and lunatics as the annual income of the said lands and worldly substance shall be sufficient to maintain; and I desire that the said hospital may be called St. Patrick's Hospital, and may be built in such a manner, that another building may be added unto it, in case the endowment thereof shall be enlarged; so that the additional building may make the whole edifice regular and complete. And my further will and desire is, that when the said hospital shall be built, the whole yearly income of the said lands and estate shall, for ever after, be laid out in providing victuals, clothing, medicines, attendance, and all other necessaries for such idiots and lunatics as shall be received into the same; and in repairing and enlarging the building from time to time, as there may be occasion. And, if a sufficient number of idiots and lunatics cannot readily be found, I desire that incurables may be taken into the said hospital to supply such deficiency; but that no person shall be admitted into it, that labours under any infectious disease; and that all such idiots, lunatics, and incurables, as shall be received into the said hospital, shall constantly live and reside therein, as well in the night as in the day; and that the salaries of agents, receivers, officers, servants, and attendants, to be employed in the business of the said hospital, shall not in the whole exceed one-fifth part of the clear yearly income or revenue thereof. And I further desire, that my executors, the survivors or survivor of them, or the heirs of such, shall not have power to demise any part of the said lands so to be purchased as aforesaid, but with consent of the Lord Primate, the Lord High Chancellor, the Lord Archbishop of Dublin, the Dean of Christchurch, the Dean of St. Patrick's, the Physician to the State, and the Surgeon-General, all for the time being, or the greater part of them, under their hands

Digitized by Google

in writing; and that no leases of any part of the said lands shall ever be made other than leases for years not exceeding thirty-one, in possession, and not in reversion or remainder, and not dispunishable of waste, whereon shall be reserved the best and most improved rents, that can reasonably and moderately, without racking the tenants, be gotten for the same, without fine. Provided always, and it is my will and earnest desire, that no lease of any part of the said lands, so to be purchased as aforesaid, shall ever be made to, or in trust for, any person any way concerned in the execution of this trust, or to, or in trust for, any person any way related or allied, either by consanguinity or affinity, to any of the persons who shall at that time be concerned in the execution of this trust: and that, if any leases shall happen to be made contrary to my intention above expressed, the same shall be utterly void, and of no effect. And I further desire, until the charter herein after mentioned shall be obtained, my executors, or the survivors or survivor of them, his heirs, executors, or administrators, shall not act in the execution of this trust, but with the consent and approbation of the said seven additional trustees, or the greater part of them, under their hands in writing, and shall, with such consent and approbation as aforesaid, have power, from time to time, to make rules, orders, and regulations, for the government and direction of the said hospital. And I make it my request to my said executors, that they may, in convenient time, apply to his Majesty for a charter to incorporate them, or such of them as shall be then living, and the said additional trustees, for the better management and conduct of this charity, with a power to purchase lands; and to supply, by election, such vacancies happening in the corporation, as shall not be supplied by succession, and such other powers as may be thought expedient for the due execution of this trust, according to my intention herein before expressed. And, when such charter shall be obtained, I desire that my executors, or the survivors or survivor of them, or the heirs of such survivor, may convey, to the use of such corporation, in fee simple, for the purposes aforesaid, all such lands and tenements as shall be purchased, in manner above mentioned. Provided always, and it is my will and intention, that my executors, until the said charter, and afterwards the corporation, to be hereby incorporated, shall, out of the yearly profits of the said lands when purchased, and out of the yearly income of my said fortune devised to my executors as aforesaid, until such purchase be made, have power to reimburse them-

Digitized by Google

selves for all such sums of their own money, as they shall necessarily expend in the execution of this trust. And that, until the said charter be obtained, all acts which shall at any time be done in the execution of this trust by the greater part of my executors then living, with the consent of the greater part of the said additional trustees, under their hands in writing, shall be as valid and effectual as if all my executors had concurred in the same.

Item, Whereas I purchased the inheritance of the tithes of the parish of Effernock, near Trim, in the county of Meath, for two hundred and sixty pounds sterling: I bequeath the said tithes to the vicars of Laracor, for the time being, that is to say, so long as the present Episcopal religion shall continue to be the national established faith and profession in this kingdom: but, whenever any other form of Christian religion shall become the established faith in this kingdom, I leave the said tithes of Effernock to be bestowed, as the profits come in, to the poor of the said parish of Laracor, by a weekly proportion, and by such other officers as may then have the power of distributing charities to the poor of the said parish, while Christianity under any shape shall be tolerated among us, still excepting professed Jews, atheists, and infidels.

Item, Whereas I have some leases of certain houses in Kevin's-Street, near the Deanery-house, built upon the Dean's ground, and one other house, now inhabited by Henry Land, in Deanery-lane, alias Mitre-alley, some of which leases are let for forty-one years, or forty at least, and not yet half expired, I bequeath to Mrs. Martha Whiteway, my lease or leases of the said houses; I also bequeath to the said Martha, my lease, of forty years, of Goodman's Holding, for which I receive ten pounds *per annum*; which are two houses or more lately built; I bequeath also to the said Martha, the sum of three hundred pounds sterling, to be paid her by my executors out of my ready money, or bank-bills, immediately after my death, as soon as the executors meet. I leave, moreover, to the said Martha, my repeating gold watch, my yellow tortoise-shell snuff-box, and her choice of four gold rings, out of seven, which I now possess.

Item, I bequeath to Mrs. Mary Swift, alias Harrison, daughter of the said Martha, my plain gold watch made by Quare, to whom also I give my Japan writing-desk, bestowed to me by my Lady Worsley, my square tortoise-shell snuff-box, richly lined and inlaid with gold, given to me by the right honourable Henrietta, now Countess of

Digitized by Google

Oxford, and the seal with a Pegasus, given to me by the Countess of Granville.*

Item, I bequeath to Mr. Ffolliot Whiteway, eldest son of the aforesaid Martha, who is bred to be an attorney, the sum of sixty pounds, as also five pounds to be laid out in the purchase of such law-books as the honourable Mr. Justice Lyndsay, Mr. Stannard, or Mr. M'Aulay, shall judge proper for him.

Item, I bequeath to Mr. John Whiteway, youngest son of the said Martha, who is to be brought up a surgeon, the sum of one hundred pounds, in order to qualify him for a surgeon, but under the direction of his mother: which said sum of one hundred pounds is to be paid to Mrs. Whiteway, in behalf of her said son John, out of the arrears which shall be due to me from my church livings, (except those of the Deanery tithes, which are now let to the Rev. Doctor Wilson,) as soon as the said arrears can be paid to my executors. I also leave the said John five pounds to be laid out in buying such physical or chirurgical books as Doctor Grattan and Mr. Nichols shall think fit for him.

Item, I bequeath to Mrs. Anne Ridgeway, now in my family, the profits of the leases of two houses let to John Cownly, for forty years, of which only eight or nine are expired, for which the said Cownly payeth me nine pounds sterling for rent, yearly. I also bequeath to the said Anne, the sum of one hundred pounds sterling, to be paid her by my executors, in six weeks after my decease, out of whatever money or bank-bills I may possess when I die; as also three gold rings, the remainder of the seven above mentioned, after Mrs. Whiteway hath made her choice of four: and all my small pieces of plate, not exceeding in weight one ounce and one third part of an ounce.

Item, I bequeath to my dearest friend Alexander Pope, of Twickenham, Esq. my picture in miniature, drawn by Zinck, of Robert, late Earl of Oxford.

Item, I leave to Edward, now Earl of Oxford, my seal of Julius Cæsar, as also another seal, supposed to be a young

* This beautiful seal has been engraved for this edition of Swift's Works from a drawing by the ingenious Mr. Bankes of Dublin. The setting is a figure of Pegasus in gold, covered with white enamel; the wings, mane, ears, eyes, tail, and hoofs, (left) gold. The mount coloured in enamel, like stone; between the wings of Pegasus, there is a small gold ring by which it may be pendant.

The Apollo and Lyre are engraved (intaglio) on a very fine coloured cornelian; the workmanship very beautiful, but the design *French*.

Digitized by Google

Hercules, both very choice antiques, and set in gold; both which I choose to bestow to the said Earl, because they belonged to her late most excellent Majesty Queen Anne, of ever glorious, immortal, and truly pious memory, the real nursing-mother of her kingdoms.

Item, I leave to the reverend Mr. James Stopford, Vicar of Finglass, my picture of King Charles the First, drawn by Vandyck, which was given to me by the said James; also, my large picture of birds, which was given to me by Thomas, Earl of Pembroke.

Item, I bequeath to the reverend Mr. Robert Grattan, Prebendary of St. Audoen's, my gold bottle-screw, which he gave me, and my strong box, on condition of his giving the sole use of the said box to his brother, Dr. James Grattan, during the life of the said Doctor, who hath more occasion for it, and the second best beaver hat I shall die possessed of.

Item, I bequeath to Mr. John Grattan, Prebendary of Clonmethan, my silver box in which the freedom of the city of Cork was presented to me; in which I desire the said John to keep the tobacco he usually cheweth, called pigtail.

Item, I bequeath all my horses and mares to the Reverend Mr. John Jackson, Vicar of Santry, together with all my horse furniture: lamenting that I had not credit enough with any chief governor (since the change of times) to get some additional church preferment for so virtuous and worthy a gentleman. I also leave him my third best beaver hat.

Item, I bequeath to the Reverend Doctor Francis Wilson, the works of Plato in three folio volumes, the Earl of Clarendon's History in three folio volumes, and my best Bible; together with thirteen small Persian pictures in the drawing-room, and the small silver tankard given to me by the contribution of some friends, whose names are engraved at the bottom of the said tankard.

Item, I bequeath to the Earl of Orrery, the enamelled silver plates to distinguish bottles of wine by, given to me by his excellent lady, and the half-length picture of the late Countess of Orkney in the drawing-room.

Item, I bequeath to Alexander M'Aulay, Esq. the gold box in which the freedom of the city of Dublin was presented to me, as a testimony of the esteem and love I have for him on account of his great learning, fine natural parts, unaffected piety and benevolence, and his truly honourable zeal in defence of the legal rights of the clergy, in opposition to all their unprovoked oppressors.

Digitized by Google

Item, I bequeath to Deane Swift, Esq. my large silver standish, consisting of a large silver plate, an ink-pot, a sand-box and bell of the same metal.

Item, I bequeath to Mrs. Mary Barber, the medal of Queen Anne and Prince George, which she formerly gave me.

Item, I leave to the Reverend Mr. John Worrall, my best beaver hat.

Item, I bequeath to the Reverend Doctor Patrick Delany, my medal of Queen Anne in silver, and on the reverse, the Bishops of England kneeling before her most sacred Majesty.

Item, I bequeath to the Reverend Mr. James King, Prebendary of Tipper, my large gilded medal of King Charles the First, and on the reverse, a crown of martyrdom, with other devices. My will, nevertheless, is, that if any of the above mentioned legatees should die before me, that then, and in that case, the respective legacies to them bequeathed, shall revert to myself, and become again subject to my disposal.

Item, Whereas I have the lease of a field in trust for me, commonly called the Vineyard,* let to the Reverend

* Mrs. Pilkington's description of Naboth's Vineyard is probably correct, though the mode in which it is given may be apocryphal. "I'll send for your husband," said the Dean, "to dine with us, and in the meantime we'll go and take a walk in Naboth's vineyard."—"Where may that be, sir?" said she.—"Why, a garden," said the Dean, "I cheated one of my neighbours out of." When they entered the garden, or rather the field, which was square, and enclosed with a stone wall, the Dean asked her how she liked it? "Why, pray, sir," said she, "where is the garden?"—"Look behind you," said he. She did so; and observed the south wall was lined with brick, and a great number of fruit trees planted against it, which, being then in blossom, looked very beautiful. "What are you so intent on?" said the Dean.—"The opening bloom," replied she; which brought Waller's lines to her remembrance,

"Hope waits upon the flow'ry prime."

"Oh!" replied he, "you are in a poetical vein; I thought you had been taking notice of my wall. It is the best in Ireland. When the masons were building it, (as most tradesmen are rogues,) I watched them very close, and, as often as they could, they put in a rotten stone; of which, however, I took no notice, until they had built three or four perches beyond it. Now, as I am an absolute monarch in the liberties, and king of the rabble, my way with them was, to have the wall thrown down to the place where I observed the rotten stone; and by doing so five or six times, the workmen were at last convinced it was their interest to be honest."

Digitized by Google

Doctor Francis Corbet, and the trust declared by the said Doctor; the said field, with some land on this side of the road, making in all about three acres, for which I pay yearly to the Dean and chapter of St. Patrick's * * * *

Whereas I have built a strong wall round the said piece of ground, eight or nine feet high, faced on the south aspect with brick, which cost me above six hundred pounds sterling: and likewise, another piece of ground as aforesaid, of half an acre, adjoining the burial-place, called the Cabbage-garden, now tenanted by William White, gardener: my will is, that the ground enclosed by the great wall may be sold for the remainder of the lease, at the highest price my executors can get for it, in belief and hopes, that the said price will exceed three hundred pounds at the lowest value: for which my successor in the Deanery shall have the first refusal: and it is my earnest desire, that the succeeding Deans and chapters may preserve the said Vineyard, and piece of land adjoining, where the said White now liveth, so as to be always in the hands of the succeeding Deans during their office, by each Dean lessening one-fourth of the purchase money to each succeeding Dean, and for no more than the present rent.

And I appoint the Honourable Robert Lindsay, one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas; Henry Singleton, Esq. Prime Sergeant to his Majesty; the Reverend Doctor Patrick Delany, Chancellor of St. Patrick's; the Reverend Doctor Francis Wilson, Prebendary of Kilmactolway; Eaton Stannard, Esq. Recorder of the City of Dublin; the Reverend Mr. Robert Grattan, Prebendary of St. Audoen's; the Reverend Mr. John Grattan, Prebendary of Clonmethan; the Reverend Mr. James Stopford, Vicar of Finglass; the Reverend Mr. James King, Prebendary of Tipper; and Alexander M'Aulay, Esq.; my executors.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, and published and declared this as my last will and testament, this third day of May, one thousand seven hundred and forty. JONATHAN SWIFT.

Signed, sealed, and published, by the above-named Jonathan Swift, *in presence of us, who have subscribed our names in his presence.*

Jo. Wynne.
Jo. Rochfort.
William Dunkin.

Digitized by Google

CODICIL TO THE WILL OF DEAN SWIFT;

Which, it is believed, was never published in any edition of the Life or Works of the Dean of St. Patrick's.

[Dr. Barrett, who has obligingly given me this copy, had not met with it when he published his "Essay on the Early Part of the Life of Swift."]

In the name of God, Amen. I, JONATHAN SWIFT, Doctor in Divinity, and Dean of the Cathedral Church of St. Patrick's, Dublin, being weak in body, but sound in mind, do make this codicil part of my last will and testament, and do appoint this writing to have the same force and effect thereof.

Whereas the Right Honourable Theophilus, Lord Newtown, deceased, did, by his last will and testament, bequeath unto Anne Brent a legacy of twenty pounds sterling a-year during her life, in consideration of the long and faithful service of her the said Anne: And whereas the said Anne, since the death of the said Lord Newtown, did intermarry with Anthony Ridgeway, of the city of Dublin, cabinet maker; and that the said Anthony Ridgeway, and Anne his wife, for valuable considerations, did grant and assign unto me, the said Dr. Swift, the said annuity or rent charge of twenty pounds sterling per annum, to hold to me, my executors, and administrators, during the life of the said Anne, and the said Anthony Ridgeway being since dead: Now I, the said Dr. Swift, do hereby devise and bequeath unto the Reverend Dr. John Wynne, Chanter of St. Patrick's, Dublin, the Reverend Mr. James King, Curate of St. Bridget's, Dublin, and the Reverend Dr. Francis Wilson, Prebendary of Kilmactolway, and the survivor or survivors of them, their heirs, executors, and administrators, the said annuity or yearly rent charge of twenty pounds sterling per annum, devised by the said Lord Newtown to the said Anne, to have, receive, and enjoy the same, during the life of the said Anne, to the uses, intents, and purposes hereinafter specified; that is to say, it is my will, that my said trustees, and the survivor or survivors of them, his and their heirs, executors, and administrators, shall (so soon after they shall have received the annuity, or any part thereof, as conveniently they can) pay or cause to be paid unto the said Anne Ridgeway the said annuity of twenty pounds sterling per

Digitized by Google

annum, during her life. In witness whereof, I, the said Dr. Jonathan Swift, have hereunto set my hand and seal, and published this codicil, as part of my last will and testament, this fifth day of May 1740.

JONATHAN SWIFT.

Signed, sealed, and published, in presence of us, who witnessed this codicil, in presence of the said testator.

John Lyon.
William Dunkin.
Roger Kendrick.

PRESENT STATE OF ST. PATRICK'S HOSPITAL.

It may be interesting to the reader to know something of the history and present state of the Hospital, for the foundation of which Swift bequeathed his fortune.

It has been observed in the Memoirs, that Oxmantown-Green was at one time proposed for the site of the intended asylum, (see p. 292.) But this plan was laid aside, and the building, as directed by Swift, in his will, was erected in the vicinity of Dr. Steevens's Hospital, adjoining to James's-street, in the city of Dublin. The Dean is said to have observed, that if it could be made to reach from thence to the Phœnix Park, there would be always a sufficient number of occupants.

The trustees were incorporated by charter, 5th August 1746. The funds bequeathed by the Dean being found inadequate to complete the building on the scale intended, they were augmented by contributions and legacies of well-disposed persons, and in 1757 the asylum was opened for reception of patients. The building, as it stands at present, forms a parallelogram, of which one of the more narrow sides is still open. The Hospital consists of three stories; the female wards to the west of the building, ranging from south to north, and the wards for men toward the east, and ranging to the same points. The basement contains the offices necessary for the establishment. The cells are one hundred and sixty-nine in number, and the health of the unhappy patients is provided for by six separate galleries for exercise, which can be heated or ventilated according to the season of the year, and are kept in the highest order. These galleries open upon gardens and airing grounds, which the patients oc-

Digitized by Google

cupy when the nature of their cases will permit. I am informed, that the utmost order and cleanliness prevail throughout this asylum, and that the unfortunate inhabitants are, upon no occasion whatever, subjected to punishment or severity. The Hospital, like the Bedlam of London, was formerly open to the public, but no visitors are now admitted without a ticket from one of the governors.

In order to maintain this extensive establishment, it was found necessary to admit patients of the better ranks as boarders at different rates, according to their circumstances. There are at present in the Hospital thirteen patients of the first class, at one hundred guineas per year; forty-one boarders of the second class, at sixty guineas per year; six respectable females maintained as boarders, but without expense; fifty-one paupers in the female, and fifty-two in the male wards;—amounting in all to one hundred and sixty-three patients.

From the funds bequeathed by the Dean, and by various other testators, particularly Sir Richard Levinge, Bart., Dr. Sterne, Bishop of Clogher, Reverend John Worrall, Dr. Joshua Pullen, and others, the endowment of the Trinity Hospital amounts to L.2500 a-year. Various grants have been made by the Irish Parliament, amounting in all to L.8000, for the purpose of discharging debt and enlarging the establishment. The annual expenditure of the Hospital amounts to L.5500 yearly, which is faithfully and judiciously laid out for the benevolent purposes of the institution.

These particulars are abridged from the information furnished to Mr. Hartstonge by the Reverend Dean Keating of St. Patrick's, whose unremitting attention to this excellent charity is beyond all praise, and by Mr. Campbell, the present Master of the Hospital, whose judicious and humane management ought not to be forgotten in this place.

THE CHARACTER OF DR. SWIFT, AFTER HIS DEATH.

October 21st, 1734.

On Saturday last, died, at the Deanery-House in Kevin Street,
The Rev. JONATHAN SWIFT, D. D.
Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin:
The greatest genius that this or perhaps any other age or nation ever produced.

Digitized by Google

His indefatigable application to study in his earlier
days, induced a total deprivation of his
understanding, in which state he has
continued for some years past.
His writings,
Which must be admired as long as the English
language continues to be understood,
Are remarkable for a vein of wit and humour,
Which runs through the whole of them without
exception, and which is not to be met with
in those of any other author.
His satire, though poignant, was intended rather to
reform than ridicule;
His manner was ever easy and natural;
His thoughts new and pleasing;
His style chaste and polished;
His verse smooth and flowing.
In his private character he was no less excellent;
His conversation was always pleasant and agreeable;
He was pious without hypocrisy,
Virtuous without austerity,
And beneficent without ostentation.
As he loved his country,
So he was ever watchful of its interest,
And zealous to promote it.
No wonder then,
That with these qualifications and endowments,
He became the delight of his countrymen,
And the admiration of foreigners.
In short, it may with justice be said,
That he was a great and good man,
An honour to his country and to human nature.

A PORTRAIT OF DR. SWIFT,

Presented to the University of Oxford, by the late John Barber, Esq., is placed in the Picture-Gallery there, with this Inscription:

IONATHAN SWIFT,
DECAN. S. PATRIC. DVBL.
EFFIGIEM VIRI MVSIS AMICISSIMI,
INGENIO PRORSVS SIBI PROPRIO CELEBERRIMI,
VT IPSVM SVIS OXONIENSIBVS ALIQVATENVS
REDONARET,
PARIETEM HABERE VOLVIT BODLEIANVM,
A. D. MDCCXXXIX,

Digitized by Google

IOHANNES BARBER, ARMIGER,
ALDERMANNVS,
NEC ITA PRIDEM PRAETOR LONDINENSIS.

In English:

JONATHAN SWIFT,
DEAN OF ST. PATRICK'S, DUBLIN.
This portrait of the Muses' friend,
Of a happy turn of wit, peculiar to himself,
That he might in some sort be restored to his Oxford Friends,
Was placed in the wall of the Bodleian gallery,
A. D. MDCCXXXIX,
At the desire of JOHN BARBER, Esquire,
Alderman, and some time Lord Mayor of London.

Dr. Stopford, Bishop of Cloyne, who always acknowledged that he owed every step of his preferment entirely to Swift, paid the following tribute to the memory of his deceased friend and benefactor:—

"MEMORIÆ JONATH. SWIFT, S.

"QUEM vivum ex animo coluit, amico liceat mortuum deflere, atque hoc qualicunque fungi munere.

"A. C. 1745 Octobris die 19mo obiit JONATHAN SWIFT, Decemus Ecclesiæ Cathedralis Sancti Patricii Dublinensis; vixit annos septuaginta septem, decem menses, 19 dies.

"Vir, ultra quam homini concessum videtur, maximis ornatus virtutibus. Vires ingenii mirandæ potius, quam a quoquam exoptandæ; quas exercuit præcipuè in politicis et poetica.

"Incorruptus inter pessimos mores; magni atque constantis animi; libertatis semper studiosissimus, atque nostri reipublicæ status, a Gothis quondam sapienter instituti, laudator perpetuus, propugnator acerrimus. Cujus tamen formam, ambitu et largitione adeo fædatam ut vix nunc dignosci possit, sæpius indignabundus plorabat.

"Patriæ amore flagrans, sortem Hiberniæ quoties deflevit, quoties laboranti subvenit, testes epistolæ illæ nunquam interituræ, quibus, insulam miserè labantem, jamque juga ahenea subeuntem, erexit, confirmavit; impiis inimicorum conatibus fortiter infractis, prostratis.

"Privatam si inspicias vitam, cum illo gratias, lepores,

Digitized by Google

sales interiisse dicas; quibus suavissimè sermones conditi, summo tamen cum decore, utpote cui unicè propositum, quod verum, quod decens, amicis et civibus suis assiduè commendare.

"Nec levior flagitiorum vindex, fraudes, ambitionem, avaritiam, dictis acerrimè laceravit, exemplo feliciter oppressit.

"Erga bonos comis, liberalis, pius, commodis amicorum anxiè inserviens; pro pauperibus semper sollicitus; quorum egestati in hac urbe mirè consuluit, pecuniâ mutuo datâ infimis artificum, in ratâ, eâque exiguâ portione, per septimanas rependenda, unde multi paupertati jam succumbentes, sese paulatim expedierunt.

"Idem, abstinentiæ exemplar antiquûm, parcè atque duriter rem familiarem administravit; quasque sibi inutiles spernebat opes, sedulo tamen comparatas, domui hospitali condendæ, moriens magnificè legavit; ubi idiotæ et lunatici, collati muneris ignari, piè semper tractarentur.

"Hic vir, tantus talisque, qui vividis ingenii viribus longè genus humanum superabat, a civibus ingratis diu neglectus, magnatum invidiam sæpius, gratiam vix unquam expertus, triginta duos annos latuit in Hibernià, nullo ultra decanatum insignitus titulo; quod tamen illi pro votis accidisse inter amicos constat, quippe cui semper in ore erat; non tam referre, quo genere honorum sis ornatus, quam a quibus et inter quos.

"Tandem senio, atque intolerandis capitis doloribus confectus, mente, memoria, sensu paulatim deficientibus, jamque penitus extinctis, per quatuor postremos vitæ annos, inter mœrentes amicos mortuus vixit; quem tamen omni laude dignissimum ritè consecrant divina ingenii lumina."

END.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

JAN 17 1893
OCT 25 1893
NOV 11 1893
JAN 24 1894
SEP 14 1894
APR 16 1897
JUL 6 1899
DEC 21 1899
DEC 4 1900
DUE OCT '66 H
CANCELLED

Digitized by Google

3 2044 090 306 689